

T O M R O C K M O R E

IRRATIONALISM

Lukács and the Marxist View of Reason



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Irrationalism: Lukács and the Marxist View of
Reason 1

ONE

Marx on Philosophy and Ideology 15

TWO

Philosophy and Science, Ideology and Truth 33

THREE

Epistemological Irrationality 55

FOUR

Marxian Economics and Neo-Kantian Philosophy 79

FIVE

The Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought 103

SIX

The Standpoint of the Proletariat 129

SEVEN

Hegel's Objective Idealism and Dialectical Materialism 153

EIGHT

Philosophical and Political Irrationalism 175

NINE

Lukács's Social Ontology 215

CONTENTS

CONCLUSION	
A Marxist View of Reason?	243

NOTES	253
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INDEX	311
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IRRATIONALISM

INTRODUCTION

Irrationalism: Lukács and the Marxist View of Reason

AT THE VERY LEAST, Karl Marx and Marxism are committed to a form of contextualism, to a view that theory, any theory, must be understood in relation to, and not in isolation from, the context in which it emerges. If some form of contextualism is assumed, if thought is dependent on social being as Marx and Marxism assert, then we cannot ignore the significance of the political evolution of Eastern Europe since 1989 for an understanding of the philosophical tendency. The political demise of Marxist politics may well offer the best opportunity in decades to penetrate beyond the orthodox political façade surrounding Marxism in order to determine, to parody Benedetto Croce, what is living and what is dead in Marxist thought.

Any such discussion does well to pay attention to the thought of Georg Lukács. He is not only an outstanding Marxist theoretician (in my own view, the most important Marxist philosopher since Marx) but by any account one of the more impressive thinkers of the century. In a long career, he made contributions to a variety of fields: to literary theory, to the history of literature, to aesthetics, to the history of philosophy, and above all to Marxism. It is, then,

no accident that *History and Class Consciousness*, his brilliant early Marxist work, has been described with Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* as one of the three most influential philosophical books of this century.¹ Since his position at its best represents a never-surpassed peak of Marxist thought, if any form of thought can be evaluated with respect to a single representative, Marxism can stand or fall on the judgment concerning his position. At a time when the politically motivated distinction, familiar in Marxism, between Marxism and the philosophical tradition has been undermined by political events, Lukács's deep roots in the mainline classical German tradition afford an important insight into the later evolution of German idealism in Marx and Marxism.

It is no accident if the nature of Lukács's Marxist thought has not often been grasped. As a radical form of thought, Marxism has long rejected all forms of what Marxists, frequently oblivious of their own social roots, like to call "bourgeois" philosophy. In Marxism the idea that thought has a class basis is invoked not merely to understand competing views, but above all to disqualify them in terms of their origins. All too often Marxists, including Lukács, object to other positions in virtue of their presumed social connections. It is, then, hardly surprising that in practice the Marxist hostility to other forms of thought has long been matched from the non-Marxist side by an equal hostility, ignorance, and unwillingness to enter into productive dialogue.

The characteristic Marxist rejection of different forms of thought on political grounds has impeded its understanding and vitiated its critique of other views. If it does not appreciate other theories, if it rules them out of bounds prior to a fair hearing, at least Marxism takes them into account in its own way. The Marxist attitude toward other tendencies is not unlike that prevailing between different competing views in the philosophical tradition whose champions characteristically exclude other options on a

wide variety of a priori grounds all designed to enable one to dispense with coming to grips with the arguments themselves.

The attitude of mutual suspicion, as typical of Marxism as its alternatives, has hindered the philosophical discussion of Marxism by thinkers of other persuasions.² Marxism has suffered heavily at the hands of non-Marxism, which, with some notable exceptions, has simply ignored it as a philosophical point of view. In part because of a deep-seated and opposite political suspicion, for the most part non-Marxism simply takes no notice at all of the Marxist alternative.

Obviously, Marxism suffers from its enforced conceptual isolation. A main role of philosophical tradition is to take the measure of ideas advanced in the discussion, to separate the intellectual wheat from the chaff so to speak. Philosophical theories depend for their evolution, indeed for their intellectual sustenance, on the informed reaction of partisans of other ideas, representative of very different, even strictly incompatible views. It is only through the intellectual give and take of debate that insights establish their usefulness and are developed by others. Philosophy is only in appearance a solitary enterprise, since it depends for its development upon the critical reception afforded by unfettered debate, which differs in kind from either politically enforced acceptance or mere silence.

In practice, Marxism has mostly been deprived of this opportunity for useful interaction. Accordingly, it has not been able to profit from the kind of criticism that is usually and routinely leveled against other theories in the philosophical tradition. Although Marxism has been underway for nearly a century and a half since Friedrich Engels, it has mainly evolved in noble but splendid intellectual isolation, only occasionally interrupted by the frank and free discussion that normally contributes to the unfolding of a philosophical tendency. It has further been hindered by its own intrinsic concern with politics. Denied useful interaction with

other tendencies, in practice Marxism has been thrown back on itself and forced to choose among various tendencies usually on political grounds unrelated to strength of philosophical argument, the criterion that supposedly prevails elsewhere.

The lack of fruitful dialogue concerning Marxism is regrettable for both Marxism and its opponents. Marxism suffers if it is unable to draw on insights from its nonadherents, from those outside its larger family. Obviously, philosophy in the long run is a kind of cooperative enterprise, according to G. W. F. Hegel an ongoing dialogue, consciously or unconsciously entered into by different thinkers engaged in the pursuit of truth. Equally obviously, since no school is self-sufficient, a kind of intellectual cross-fertilization is necessary for any movement. Since no tendency, much less Marxism, is self-sustaining, the lack of an external source of enrichment risks a loss of intellectual vitality and even the possibility of an early conceptual demise. Symptoms of a deep intellectual illness preceding the impending political demise have long been present in the widely seen Marxist rigidity, as witness its concern with orthodoxy. But non-Marxism suffers as well if it is unable to take into account the genuine contributions of Marx as well as talented Marxist thinkers and their allies, including such writers as Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, and Karel Kosik, or Antonio Gramsci and Jean-Paul Sartre, and more recently Jürgen Habermas. Indeed, this conceptual blindness even affects the rare non-Marxist equipped to understand the philosophical contribution of Marxism, which it reduces merely to its political consequences.³

The political revolution underway at the time of this writing in 1990 in Eastern Europe is not directed in favor of, but against Marxist political practice, ultimately based on a certain way of understanding and carrying forward the claimed insights of Marx's position. But although the present political evolution is motivated by a deep anti-Marxism, a likely, useful dividend of these political changes is an increased appreciation by Marxists

and non-Marxists of each other's positions. Certainly, any Marxist whose thought retains a connection to political reality will need to reconsider the link of Marxism, which claimed to speak in the name of the people, to the same people who have now clearly rejected its political form. For Marxism to rethink the relation of Marxism to the social context may open the way for a Marxist rethinking of its attitude toward and connection to non-Marxist philosophy.

Conversely, as the political debris of institutionalized Marxism is swept away, non-Marxists will have a better opportunity to consider the philosophical import of Marx and Marxism. The practical separation of Marxism from its political claims, brought about by the rejection of so-called real socialism, obviously facilitates the philosophical evaluation of Marx and Marxism. In both cases, the separation of Marxist philosophy from Marxist political assertions is crucial: for Marx in order to free his thought from the politically motivated assertions for continuity between his position and Marxism; and for Marxism in order to evaluate it like any other philosophical theory, without any form of political special pleading, solely on its philosophical merits.

With the exception of the emergence of analytical Marxism, the strictly philosophical evaluation of Marxism, which accords decisive weight to reasons, not to political claims, is infrequent and mainly undeveloped. But analytical Marxism is mainly concerned with Marxism as a form of social science and only secondarily with the careful analysis of historical views.⁴ The present study of Lukács's view of reason is intended to contribute to the kind of philosophical evaluation of Marxism facilitated by the political collapse underway in Eastern Europe. In spite of its importance, Lukács's thought is comparatively unknown. The numerous thinkers who have learned from him, especially from his Marxism, or from his early non-Marxist literary studies, for the most part tend to confine themselves to his early Marxist writings. The tend-

ency to neglect his later thought, because of its obvious Stalinism, overlooks its specific contribution and overestimates the heterodoxy of his initial form of Marxism. For various reasons, his final, unfinished study of ontology, one of his most important Marxist contributions has scarcely been studied, even by Marxist scholars.³ Most studies of Lukács's Marxism, especially those in English, tend to focus on its first flowering and, accordingly, neglect the development of his later position.⁴ Hence, another aim of this book is to call attention to the later evolution of Lukács's Marxist thought and to the significance of its final form.

The focus of this book is Lukács's Marxist conception of reason. At least since Parmenides, reason is a persistent theme in the philosophical tradition. Over the centuries, numerous important philosophers have engaged the complexities of this topic. One sign of an important philosophical tendency is its capacity to contribute widely to a large series of philosophical concerns. If Marxism is to be understood as a serious philosophical approach, then it is appropriate to ask: What are the nature and limits of its view of reason? Since Lukács is a leading Marxist philosopher, we can look to his writings as a significant source of the Marxist view of reason.

This focus on reason determines the limits of the present discussion. There is currently a genuine need, especially in English, for a detailed account of Lukács's entire position. But those who seek such an account will need to look elsewhere.⁵ The present work does not pretend to describe the non-Marxist phase of Lukács's position, even in outline.⁶ It will have little to say about Lukács's important studies of aesthetics, the result of an interest spanning both his pre-Marxist and Marxist periods.⁷ Although it has been suggested that Lukács's main contribution may lie in this domain, it is a special topic for which I lack specific qualifications.

Reason is a main concern in the philosophical tradition. It has been said that despite their differences, all forms of philosophy

share an interest in knowledge, in Hegel's view, in the demonstration of the unity of subject and object. If knowledge is the philosophical end in view, then reason is its means. It is through reason that knowledge is attained, and the history of philosophy is composed of a series of attempts to provide an adequate view of reason, that is, a conception of reason adequate to justify claims to know.

Marxism was never unified from a political perspective and is even less so philosophically speaking. In fact, Marxism is as varied as any other philosophical tendency; and its relation to Marx is at least as controversial as that, say, of the Vienna Circle to Wittgenstein, or the Kantians to Immanuel Kant. In each instance, later writers assert a basic, unequaled grasp of the thought of a master thinker, a claim to provide the only correct reading of the position. But in each case, later views, sailing under the same flag, differ radically among themselves, and bear only a tenuous relation to the system in question.

For present purposes, Marxism can be described in terms of five common doctrines shared by most, or all, of its varieties. Each of these doctrines is present in the thought of Engels, the first Marxist and creator of Marxism.¹⁰ These include the convictions that: (1) there is a distinction in kind between Marxism and philosophy; (2) philosophy comes to an end in Hegel's thought; (3) philosophy and science are incompatible; (4) philosophy, which is "bourgeois," and determined by its relation to the economic organization of society, provides a false consciousness of the world, whereas Marxism offers true, undistorted knowledge; (5) the real problems of philosophy, which it cannot resolve, find their solution within Marxism.

Taken together, these doctrines constitute a Marxist view of reason, that is, a form of thought that differs from others in its unique ability to grasp the object of knowledge. In his Marxist phase, Lukács initially accepts without question a version of each

of these Marxist doctrines although, unlike most Marxist, his later evolution raises questions about these assumptions. His Marxism represents an ongoing argument in favor of the Marxist view of reason. With respect to Marxism, the specific difference of his thought lies in his outstanding knowledge—unusual, in fact unsurpassed from the Marxist vantage point—of the history of philosophy, particularly modern thought, above all German idealism.

His work provides an exceptionally interesting defense and development, over a period of many years of the Marxist perspective. His Marxist phase can be described as a long effort to provide a Marxist view of reason adequate to the claims of the Marxist tradition. His corpus, which is a mixture of extreme dogmatism and rare comprehension, blindness and insight, demonstrates an extraordinary evolution in the gradual deconstruction or relativization of the Marxist dogmas identified above. As the politically motivated stress on the supposed difference in kind between Marx and German idealism diminishes his rich analysis of the manifold connections between Marx and his German predecessors only becomes more interesting. That the same result has now followed from the decisive political changes in Eastern Europe only heightens the value of Lukács's Marxist writings.

This study of Lukács's Marxist view of reason focuses on his application of the neo-Kantian conception of irrationalism to non-Marxist philosophy. His command of the history of philosophy is responsible for two interesting aspects of his discussion. First, as will emerge below, Lukács differs from other Marxists in the specific dependence of his perspective on German neo-Kantianism. Hence, a further aim of this essay is to expose the neo-Kantian element in his own form of Marxism. It will be seen that Lukács's distinctive understanding of the relation between so-called bourgeois and Marxist forms of philosophy in terms of the distinction between irrationality and rationality arises out of his creative rethinking of the approach to history developed in German neo-

Kantianism, particularly by Emil Lask. Second, it should be noted that although his historical preparation does not change the basic orientation of his discussion, it lends an exceptionally rich historical character to his writings.

Reason, or rationalism, and irrationalism are correlative concepts. Like "reason" and "rationalism," "irrationalism" is an imprecise term, which can mean different things. There is no single normal view of either reason or its denial in irrationalism.¹¹ It seems that in all its varieties "irrationalism" can only be understood in the privative sense as "a lack of reason, with respect to that which cannot rationally be grasped or known." As such, "irrationalism" contains a covert reference to ontology and epistemology, to what Benedict de Spinoza later called the order and connection of things and ideas.¹² More widely considered, "irrationalism" can refer further to a view of ethics, or individual comportment, whose irrationality reflects the irrationality of the world, or even to the intrinsic irrationality of society and of the human soul.

Rationalism is associated with a belief going back at least to ancient Greece that reality is ordered and knowable by the human intellect. This idea is expressed as early as Pythagoras in the view that things are numbers.¹³ The view of reality as intrinsically mathematical and hence knowable was threatened by the discovery of the incommensurability of the diagonal with respect to the side of the square.¹⁴ Philosophy in general has always been concerned with reason, and rationalism in various forms runs throughout the entire philosophical tradition. The dominance of rationalism is reflected throughout in the writings of such important thinkers as Plato and Aristotle, René Descartes, Kant and Hegel, and more recently, Edmund Husserl. Irrationalism is represented by those who rebel in various ways against the rule of reason. Such writers include Søren Kierkegaard, who denies that reason can know existence, Arthur Schopenhauer, who exalts the will, F. W. J. Schell-

ing, who insists on intuition, Friedrich Nietzsche, who reduces epistemology to biology, Heidegger,¹⁵ who is concerned with the meaning of Being present under the mode of absence, and Sartre, who regards existence as intrinsically meaningless. Irrationalism of various kinds is further widely present outside philosophy, for instance in the theological view that there is something irrational about modernity itself.¹⁶

Lukács, like Marxists in general, can be classed as a philosophical rationalist. His rationalism, which is mainly epistemological, is manifested in his concern to defend the claims of reason to know the surrounding social world. Lukács's rationalism has both non-Marxist and Marxist components. Like other philosophical tendencies, Marxism encompasses a wide variety of distinguishable and even incompatible views. But Marxism of all kinds is committed to the defense of reason against unreason. The very idea of the transition from capitalism to socialism is grounded in the belief that modern industrial society is intrinsically irrational with respect to human being. Marxists routinely hold that the social irrationality of capitalism is reflected in the type of thought dominant in that form of society. The view of the intrinsic irrationality of non-Marxist philosophy is a staple of Marxist philosophy.¹⁷

Lukács defends the Marxist view of the irrationality of non-Marxist thought in various ways throughout his long Marxist phase. But his particular approach to the problem of irrationalism arises in his pre-Marxist thought, above all in his aesthetic writings. Irrationalism becomes a problem in the thought of the eighteenth century, particularly in aesthetics and logic.¹⁸ Kant, who maintains that a judgment of taste (*Geschmack*) is aesthetical, describes taste as "not logical, but aesthetical," meaning "nothing other than subjective."¹⁹ Taste is an art insofar as it is subjective, and concerned with examples, and only a science if it derives the possibility of such judgments from the human faculties.²⁰ He resolves the antinomy, which inevitably arises from conflicting judg-

ments of taste, through the concept of the subjective purposiveness of nature.²¹ But since this purpose can merely be thought, but not known, he is forced to concede that aesthetics affords a mere intuition that can never become a cognition,²² in effect a mere idea.²³

Kant, of course, distinguished between appearance and essence in his argument that reality, in his terminology, the thing-in-itself, does not appear in experience and, hence, cannot be known.²⁴ In Lukács's aesthetics, the problem of irrationality arises as part of the problem of a grasp of the object of experience (*Erlebnis*). This problem runs throughout and connects both of Lukács's pre-Marxist works on aesthetics.²⁵ He specifically refers to Kant's view of taste as individual, and hence neither logical nor susceptible to systematization.²⁶ The problem of irrationality lies in the unavoidable duality between experience and its description arising from the fact that, in principle, any description is inadequate to portray an experience.²⁷ The art work appears to us in experience as inadequately transmissible; it is cognitively irrational since it is not systematizable.²⁸

In his approach to this difficulty, Lukács turns to neo-Kantian aesthetic theory, especially the views of Heinrich Rickert and Lask. His proposed solution lies in the adoption of the neo-Kantian idea of value together with a neo-Kantian, ontological reading of the thing-in-itself. He postulates the equivalency of content (*Material*), interpreted, in Kantian fashion as the condition of experience whatsoever, and experience.²⁹ Every systematic study of the principle of value must run up against the necessarily postulated existence of a so-called primitive content (*Urmaterial*) as its transcendental ground.³⁰ But since by definition knowledge is restricted to experience, what lies beyond experience cannot be known. It follows that value is a final condition (*schlechthin Letztes*) and cannot be deduced.³¹ Hence, the irrationality that arises in the inability of subjectivity finally to know objectivity cannot be overcome. To put this same point in other language, all knowledge

strives for system but such attempts fail because of the need to invoke a given that is in principle resistant to systematization.

Lukács's view of irrationality implicitly refers to a theory of knowledge of the object of experience, or a systematic grasp of the given, as rational. In his Marxist writings, Lukács applies the neo-Kantian analysis of irrationality to non-Marxist, or bourgeois, views of philosophy. His view unfolds in a series of stages governed by successive versions of the argument for Marxism as rational and non-Marxism as irrational with respect to knowledge.

The present work will discuss in detail Lukács's Marxism as a Marxist theory of reason. The discussion falls naturally into three sections of three chapters each, concerning the background of his Marxist position, its initial form, and its later development. The roots of his Marxism will be covered in separate accounts of Marx, Marxism, and German neo-Kantianism. This part of the discussion differs from other accounts in two ways: in the attention to the significance of the differences between Marx and Marxism² and in the stress placed on the role of neo-Kantianism, above all Lask, in the constitution of Lukács's Marxist view of reason. Lukács's sudden conversion to Marxism in part conceals the continuity between the pre-Marxist and Marxist phases of his thought. The role of German neo-Kantianism, prominent in his pre-Marxist writings on aesthetics, determines his later effort to defend Marxist rationalism against non-Marxist forms of irrationalist thought.

"Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," the difficult central essay of *History and Class Consciousness*, is more often mentioned than studied with care. Since Lukács's Marxism presupposes an extensive grasp of the history of philosophy, constitutive of his point of view, it is not sufficient merely to evoke other Marxists or his philosophical background. Detailed analysis of this complex text will bring out the debt to Lask and German neo-Kantianism in Lukács's proposed Marxist solution of the al-

leged central problem of German philosophy. It will show that what is widely thought of as Lukács's pioneer form of Hegelian Marxism is, in fact, largely based on his creative appropriation of insights borrowed from Kant and the neo-Kantians.

The final chapters will follow the evolution of Lukács's Marxist theory of reason, expressed in the crucial distinction—basic to his position—between irrational and rational forms of theory, in his later thought. Study of Lukács's Marxist phase is often confined to his brilliant early breakthrough to Marxism. But Lukács's Marxism underwent interesting developments in the nearly five decades that followed this work. Study of the evolution of his thought in the period following *History and Class Consciousness* will reveal the continuity of his Marxism over time, the successive forms and final relativization of the approach to the difference between Marxism and non-Marxism through the distinction between rationalism and irrationalism, and the important final discussion of Marxist social ontology. The result is to expose an unsuspected Marxist theory of reason.

Marx on Philosophy and Ideology

A CLAIM FOR THE CONTINUITY between Marx and Marxism is not merely a scholastic problem of interest to specialists; it is immediately important for the understanding of Marx's position. The task of the present chapter is to bring out some of the differences between Marx and Marxism and their significance for Lukács's Marxist view of reason. A key theme in Lukács's Marxism is the effort to make a case for Marxism as a viable theory, more precisely as providing the solution to what he regards as the central problem of German philosophy. As part of his argument, Lukács offers a detailed, original reading of Marx. As a first step in the understanding of Lukács's Marxism, we require a discussion of Marx's thought.

Lukács's argument for the distinction in kind between irrational and rational forms of theory presupposes a prior distinction between what Marxists call bourgeois philosophy and Marxism. Since Engels, Marxism has maintained that non-Marxist forms of thought are ideological, in Lukács's terms mere forms of false consciousness, since they are vitiated by their relation to the social context in which they arise. Since this view claims allegiance to

Marx's thought, it is appropriate to examine his understanding of philosophy and ideology as an initial step in the analysis of Lukács's view of reason.

We can begin with some general comments about Marx's position. The importance of these remarks will emerge only in comparison with the discussion, in the next chapter, of the thought of Engels, the first Marxist. Unfortunately, the philosophical background of Marxist thinkers is, in general, inversely proportional to the political and even philosophical weight accorded to their philosophical claims. Thus Engels, who began Marxism, possessed a Gymnasium education and attended some lectures by Schelling, but was otherwise a philosophical autodidact. V. I. Lenin, whose views are still accorded philosophical importance, was trained as a lawyer but was wholly self-taught in philosophy. Joseph Stalin, the "genial" creator of dialectical materialism, was expelled from the seminary but possessed political credentials that enabled him to make philosophical statements that were, until recently, taken seriously by serious Marxists.¹

As Marxism claims to continue Marx's position, and as it represents itself in Lenin's memorable phrase as the "science of Marx's views," it is useful to call attention to the conventional nature of Marx's philosophical background. Although his desire to teach was quickly frustrated, he possessed a Ph.D. in philosophy. Since his dissertation concerned a problem in Greek philosophy from a quasi-Hegelian perspective, it is not surprising that he possessed particular competence in Greek philosophy, which he read in the original, and in Hegel's writings.

It is more difficult to specify his wider view of philosophy. His texts contain no general discussion of the prior philosophical tradition or of philosophy as such. Instead, there are passages concerning different thinkers virtually throughout his corpus. These include: comments in letters;² excerpts and remarks in notebooks on the "Epicurean, Stoic and skeptical philosophies"; his doctoral

dissertation on "The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophies of Nature"; the analysis of Hegel's position in several early texts, especially in the "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State" and the "Paris Manuscripts" (1844); a series of polemical remarks mainly directed against other Young Hegelians in *The German Ideology* and *The Holy Family*; as well as isolated comments in later writings, including *Capital*, on a wide variety of philosophers, including Aristotle, Hegel, John Locke, and even Giambattista Vico.

Nearly every facet of Marx's thought has been studied in an enormous literature whose sheer size long ago surpassed the capacity and certainly the desire of even the most industrious student; but it is significant that Marx's view of philosophy, crucial for a grasp of his theory, has rarely if ever been studied in depth. His view of philosophy is doubly important: first, for the comprehension of his own position; as well as for an understanding of the Marxist refusal of philosophy, which is constitutive for its own self-comprehension. It is, for instance, important to understand how Marx understood the status of his own thought. It is significant to learn whether he believed that his position was merely another form of philosophical theory, for instance a further development of German idealism, perhaps even a critical extension of Hegel's thought; or whether, on the contrary, he held, as generations of Marxists have asserted in his name, that it is not philosophy, but something else.

The complexity of the problem can be illustrated by a series of three distinctions common in Marxist discussions, between philosophy and science, ideology and truth, and idealism and materialism. These distinctions, which are routinely invoked to differentiate between Marx and Marxism (considered as a single conceptual entity) and non-Marxism (which Marxists typically consider as bourgeois philosophy) are obviously suspect. Thus, for some twenty-five centuries, most recently in Husserl, philosophy has

claimed to be not only scientific but, in a fundamental sense, science as well.³ It is exceedingly difficult to understand the difference between ideology and truth since claims for truth are routinely tinged with ideology, especially in Marxism. And the distinction between idealism and materialism is insufficient to differentiate Marx's position from the surrounding philosophical tradition. For none of the so-called German idealists exemplifies the Marxist view of idealism, and Marx's own position is not materialism—however this term is interpreted—in any obvious sense.

In fact, important Marxists cast doubt on the viability of the distinctions underlying the Marxist view of Marx. In a well-known passage, Engels himself suggested "that German socialists are proud to be descended not only from Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, but from Kant, Fichte, and Hegel as well."⁴ The suggestion that Marx's position is in fact not antithetical to philosophy, but a form of philosophy has not prevented generations of Marxists, including Engels, from insisting that Marx must be understood, as he himself obscurely suggested, through the transformation of Hegelian idealism into a materialist form.⁵ Despite this conviction, it is interesting that the relation of Marx to Hegel also seems never to have been studied in detail.⁶

It is obvious, but paradoxical, that the enormous literature devoted to Marx has still not reached agreement on such basic issues as the general nature of his thought. A short cut is provided by an inspection of Marx's texts as distinguished from the Marxists' discussion of them. Since Marx never systematically develops his concept of philosophy, it must be reconstructed from relevant passages in his corpus. Such passages are scattered widely throughout his corpus; but the primary texts for an understanding of Marx's view of philosophy are the "Paris Manuscripts," *The German Ideology*, the introduction to the *Grundrisse*, and the introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy*. In the "Paris Manuscripts," he further develops a general critique of Hegel already begun in the

"Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State"; in *The German Ideology*, together with Engels, he sketches in outline a novel concept of ideology that Marxists have tended to use as a weapon against other forms of philosophy;⁷ in the famous introduction to the *Grundrisse*, he briefly characterizes a method of political economy whose relation to the Hegelian approach to philosophy is striking and profound; and in the even more famous introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy* he describes his own intellectual itinerary and offers a succinct discussion of what has since routinely been regarded as the materialist conception of history.⁸ Since the passages in the *Grundrisse* and *Critique of Political Economy* are primarily metatheoretical texts concerning Marx's own rival view, it is appropriate to confine the discussion here to the relevant portions of the "Paris Manuscripts" and *The German Ideology*.

We can begin with the "Paris Manuscripts." One of the most interesting features of this of this text is its stress on the concept of human being. This stress is responsible for the widespread discussion of Marx's early thought as a kind of philosophical humanism.⁹ It is this same humanism that is clearly rejected by Heidegger in the "Letter on Humanism," although the extent of Heidegger's own humanism has been called into question by the discussion of his turn to National Socialism.¹⁰ In this text, Marx is engaged in what has become known as philosophical anthropology. More precisely, he here formulates an anti-Cartesian concept of human being as basically active; and he applies this concept to comprehend the social context, political economy, and other philosophy. This is further the perspective from which he criticizes Hegel in a section of the "Paris Manuscripts" that the editors have called "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy."¹¹

Since the emergence of so-called Hegelian Marxism in the writings of Lukács and Korsch, emphasis on Hegel's importance for the interpretation of Marx has become common in the Marx liter-

ature. Hegel is frequently mentioned in Marx's texts. The short reference to Hegel in the afterword to the second German edition of *Capital* has for years played an important role in the Marxist reading of Marx.¹² In addition to this brief reference, there are two more extensive passages on Hegel's position in Marx's writings: in the "Paris Manuscripts," as mentioned, and in another, shorter text from 1843, entitled "The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State." The passage in the "Paris Manuscripts," the only extended analysis of Hegel's position in Marx's corpus, offers a wide-ranging but confusing and repetitive discussion of Hegel's major writings with particular attention to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.¹³ The other passage is a detailed, paragraph by paragraph commentary on part of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Whether the treatment of Hegel's position in the "Paris Manuscripts" is fair or adequate is another question. That is one of the things that we will have to decide.

The discussion begins with a remark about the importance of taking stock of where one stands with respect to the Hegelian dialectic.¹⁴ This comment appears less odd if we recall that in the period immediately after Hegel's death it was widely felt that philosophy had come to an end in Hegel's thought. Many contemporary writers believed that if there was anything more to do, it had to be done outside the philosophical domain. For instance, Heinrich Heine, the great German poet and student of Hegel, in a famous statement, said that the philosophical revolution was over since Hegel had closed the great circle.¹⁵

Marx's comments on Ludwig Feuerbach are appreciative.¹⁶ He credits Feuerbach with showing that philosophy is a form of religion, and, as such, another mode of human alienation, with having founded genuine materialism and positive science on the social relationship of individuals, and with opposing the Hegelian principle of the negation of the negation. Marx's point is that philoso-

phy is illusory since it offers an essentially mythical view of the social world, which, on the contrary, we can understand, following Feuerbach, from the perspective of so-called genuine materialism and positive science. Now, this point is ambiguous, since it could mean either that philosophy as such is insufficient to know the social world (a point later developed by Engels and basic to Marxist thinking), or it could mean (as Marx later emphasizes, for instance in *The German Ideology*) that a particular kind of philosophy, for instance Hegelian idealism, is inadequate. Despite the looseness of his formulation, the object of Marx's criticism here seems to be Hegel's position, not philosophy in general. This interpretation, which contradicts the Marxist approach to Marx, is supported by two factors: the limitation of criticism in this context to Hegel's view only and the utter absence in any Marxian text of a rejection of philosophy as such.

Obviously, for Marx at this point, materialism and science are opposed to philosophy, or at least to Hegel's philosophy. In particular, he rejects the progression of Hegelian dialectic as telling us anything basic about the world. Marx now reinforces this point in three ways. First, he notes that Feuerbach understands what Hegel calls the negation of the negation as an intraphilosophical occurrence that has nothing to do with the world external to the mind of the philosopher.¹⁷ There is a clear suggestion that philosophy, or at least a form of it, for instance Hegel's position, is at best irrelevant and possibly even socially harmful through its tendency to distract us from real problems. Second, Marx claims that Hegel has merely provided an abstract, logical expression of the historical process, which, unfortunately, fails to capture the historical process itself.¹⁸ Third, he underlines his assertion of the abstract character of Hegelian thought through the comment that logic, the instrument of the Hegelian philosophy, is a form of alienated, or abstract, understanding, indifferent to real content.¹⁹ The clear

suggestion is that another, better theory would not be indifferent to, but would follow closely, the real content that Hegel's position cannot grasp.

Marx develops his critical perspective in two further comments. On the one hand, he suggests that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel understands such social characteristics as wealth and the state merely from an abstract perspective, hence only on the abstract level of thought.²⁰ Hegel's position is problematic since it employs an Aristotelian model in which the predicates are understood as predicates of a subject from which they can be separated by thought. For this reason, Hegel fails to capture either reality or the movement of reality, for which he offers moments of thought.

On the other hand, Marx makes a point that illustrates the Hegelian cast of his position despite his critique of speculative idealism. Hegel's constant concern to find what is positive in a view he otherwise criticizes or rejects, what he calls the rose in the cross of the present, is well known.²¹ Although he rejects the Hegelian position as merely abstract, Marx nonetheless acknowledges its intrinsic importance. He regards Hegel's achievement as the grasp, through the dialectic of negativity, of the self-creation of human being as a process ultimately traceable to human work or labor, that is, to real human activity.²² Marx's point, which is a key to the understanding of his own thought, is that Hegel presents an abstract, or alienated, form of a profound insight, that is, that human being must be understood in terms of its own productive activity.²³

Marx now works out this insight in some rapid comments. Hegel, who conceives labor as the essence of human being, fails to note its negative side. He conceives of labor as taking place as it were within the mind, whereas it is, in fact, a physical process. Alienation, then, is not, as Hegel holds, an epistemological relation to an object to be known; it is rather what occurs in the

normal process of production when the product is confiscated by the capitalist, the owner of the means of production.

The passage concerning Hegel in the "Paris Manuscripts" is interesting and important, but also repetitious, no doubt because it was not intended for publication, at least not in this form. Marx's main criticism is that Hegel's philosophy is abstract and, for that reason, unable to grasp the real process of human social development, for which, however, it furnishes an abstract model. In the remainder of the passage, we see Marx continuing to criticize Hegel in the same manner and continuing to make tentative steps toward the elaboration of his own theory as a way to grasp human being in a concrete manner. There is no need to study the rest of the passage in detail, since that would not add to our understanding of Marx's view of philosophy.

In the "Paris Manuscripts" Marx objects to a form of philosophy, as represented by Hegel's position, but not to philosophy as such. He develops his complaint against speculative philosophy in the first part of *The German Ideology*. This is the initial section of a much longer, polemical work. Since the polemic is directed against writers who have since faded into history, it is unnecessary to discuss the polemical side in detail. Engels is a co-author of this text, but it is not clear what part each contributed to it. After some attempt to publish the manuscript, the effort was abandoned and it was left, so to speak, to the mice.

For present purposes, this book is important as the source of a concept of ideology on which the Marxist tradition has continued to rely. Even before we turn to that concept, we need to bring out four points. First, some commentators have tried to distinguish sharply between Marx's earlier, supposedly immature, overtly philosophical writings, and the later, more mature, supposedly scientific texts. From this perspective, *The German Ideology* belongs to the so-called mature portion of Marx's writings. It follows that

Marx became mature only a scant year after he composed his early writings, ending with the "Paris Manuscripts."²⁴

There is something in principle suspect about the effort to differentiate radically incompatible periods in the thought of a major thinker. Any position that does not achieve instant perfection or intellectual rigor mortis undergoes change and development. Although a significant writer can change his or her mind, even a change of mind is located within the larger context of a body of thought. Thus, the views in Bertrand Russell's various periods, in Sartre's existentialist and Marxist phases, in Wittgenstein's earlier and later moments, in Kant's pre-critical and critical periods, and in Heidegger's position before and after the turning belong to the thought of a single individual. In the present case, it is important to stress the continuity through development of Marx's view of philosophy in the "Paris Manuscripts" and *The German Ideology* to which it is often opposed.

Second, this is a work often mentioned as the source of Marx's historical materialism, the theory he sketches in highly compact fashion in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*. Suffice to say that "historical materialism" is a term he never uses to refer to his own thought, but that others, especially Marxists, have routinely applied to it.²⁵

Third, he here continues the polemic against Hegel, or rather perhaps widens it to include philosophy as such. As was the case in the "Paris Manuscripts" it is important to ask whether Marx's quarrel at this point is with Hegel or with philosophy itself.

Fourth, as noted, Marx here develops his well-known theory of ideology. The outlines of the theory are not clear, but it is clear that ideology is still rampant. From that respect, Daniel Bell's proclamation of the end of ideology is merely another stage of its continued presence.

In the preface, Marx begins by restating a point from the "Paris Manuscripts," which he here applies to recent philosophical dis-

cussion. In general, we are subject to mythological concepts of social reality, erroneous thoughts that rule over us. Philosophy, which is alienated from social reality, is an example of this failure of thought to come to grips with the outside world.²⁶ What in German philosophy has been presented as an unprecedented revolution is, in fact, only the putrescence of the absolute spirit.²⁷ There is, hence, no real revolution since everything occurs only on the level of consciousness. More generally, recent philosophers have failed to inquire into the connection of German philosophy with German reality.²⁸

Marx is certainly correct that some philosophers are unaware of, and certainly unconcerned with, the relation of thought to social reality. He now offers the nucleus of a theory obviously intended to be an alternative to the abstract approach he rejects. We must begin from real premises, verifiable in empirical fashion, which differ from arbitrary assumptions or dogmas.²⁹ His premise is that real people produce the means of subsistence, and, finally, themselves.³⁰ In response, he offers a theory of society based on the emergence of the institution of private property on the basis of the division of labor.³¹ This theory is profoundly interesting and might even be correct, although we cannot discuss it here.

For the present discussion, the relevant point is the claim that the production of ideas is linked in the first place to material activity. He now elaborates this point in two ways.³² First, in ideology, people and their circumstances appear upside down.³³ In other words, ideology, which gets things backwards so to speak, leads to mistaken apprehensions or misunderstandings. Marx attributes this error not to a mere mistake in thinking, but to the relation of thought to the social context. His idea seems to be that in some sense the social context, the object, distorts its own apprehension. In other words, capitalism causes those who analyze it to fail to grasp it.

Second, Marx roots his claim for the distortion of thought by

the social context in a more general theory of the relation of thought and what he calls life. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness is determined by life.³⁴ Marx invokes the claim made in the "Paris Manuscripts" in the statement that where speculation ends real positive science begins.³⁵ In principle, then, his view is that we need to attend to the way the world is in order to understand it. But it is unclear here how consciousness is limited by life. Marx's ambiguity on this point is enormously important for an understanding of his theory. Is he saying that thought is determined by its object, in this case the social context? Or, is he rather saying something else, for instance, that thought that grasps its object must grasp it in a real manner as opposed to conjuring up a mere philosophical illusion.

Marx never specifies his precise view in any of his writings, and we can only infer the answer. Rather, he here reaffirms his point that consciousness is itself a social product.³⁶ This statement can be construed in two ways, both of which appear strikingly up to date. First, consciousness is a product of its time and place. This is similar to the traditional philosophical claim that truth appears not only in time, but at a specific time and place. Second, and by implication, he states that consciousness cannot be separated from the context in which it arises. If he is correct, it follows that claims for timeless truth cannot be sustained. In other words, truth is not only in but of time. The result is a claim for some type of contextualism, that is, the need to consider any theory as at least partly determined by, but not reducible to, the context in which it arises. This claim is obviously related to Hegel's well-known remark in *The Philosophy of Right* that each philosophy is a product of its own time.³⁷

Marx continues his analysis in the discussion of civil society and the conception of history under the general heading of the illusion of the epoch. His main point is that we need to explain ideas from practice, not practice from ideas. The new aspect here is the state-

ment that the formation of ideas is to be explained from material practice.³⁸ The implication that he draws is that we can only change ideas by changing their underlying basis in social reality. To fail to see this, according to Marx, is to fall into idealistic humbug. He goes on to assert that in the entire conception of history up to the present, its real basis has been ignored. If politicians are the guide, that is still the case.

According to Marx, our present view of social reality is merely the illusion of the epoch if we fail to grasp it concretely. He restates this point when he says that the ideas of the ruling class are, in every epoch, the ruling ideas.³⁹ What this means is that the ideas that we adopt are those that represent certain relations of force within society, but that do not necessarily represent the truth. The role of the ideologist, from this angle of vision, is to perfect the illusion of the ruling class.

Marx's notion of ideology is interesting, but its precise outlines are far from clear. Some clarification is provided by his application of this view to the critical philosophy in a brief passage on Kant and liberalism. According to Marx, Kant was satisfied with the good will alone, even if there was no practical result. This is only partially true, since although Kant insisted on the intrinsic goodness of the good will he was also concerned with its realization, with what later came to be called the relation of theory to practice.⁴⁰ Beginning with Hegel, many writers have criticized the formalism of Kant's ethics.⁴¹ What is new is Marx's further remark that Kant's satisfaction with the inefficacy of the good will corresponds to the impotence, depression, and wretchedness of the German burgher.⁴² His point, of course, is that not only is Kant's view inadequate; it is further representative of the form of "French" liberalism, based on class interest that emerged in Germany. In a word, the philosopher, who preaches free thought, does not do so freely; he is in fact the representative of a certain social point of view, which determines his thought.

At stake is the social function of philosophy. At least since Plato, a long series of philosophers have held that philosophy is indispensable for social well-being. Kant specifically reaffirms a stronger version of this idea in view of philosophy as a concept of the world (*Weltbegriff*) or *Conceptus cosmicus*, necessarily linked to the interests of human being in general.⁴³ In his view pure theory is *ipso facto* practical, since pure reason as such is intrinsically socially useful. Marx denies this claim in a description of the practical effect of the critical theory. He holds that the social function of Kant's philosophy is unwittingly to preserve the social status quo, whether or not that is Kant's intent.

The result is two fold. On the one hand, Marx denies the Kantian theory of the social utility of philosophy, that is, the view of philosophy as socially indispensable through an examination of its function. By implication, he further denies the self-congratulatory conception of philosophy, restated by Kant, concerning its supposedly intrinsic social utility. On the other hand, as part of his argument, Marx invokes an obscure causal relation based on his idea of ideology. The essence of this view, for which the remarks on Kant serve as an illustration, is the claim that thought does not determine the social context by which it is determined.⁴⁴ Now this assertion is less than pellucid since it is far from obvious how or that the social context influences the way in which we understand it.

As an aid in clarifying the doctrine of ideology, it is helpful to distinguish two themes. First, there is the problem of exactly how Marx understood the concept of ideology. Second, there is the issue of how Marxists have understood and made use of Marx's view in their own writings. As concerns the concept of ideology, it is clear that Marx himself is not clear. Marx's concept of ideology illustrates Kant's interesting claim that states that a thinker who makes an original contribution is often unable to formulate the idea for which he merely gropes; his doctrine is often stated in

more rigorous fashion by his followers who, going beyond the description of the founder, continue to grope for the idea, which neither he nor they succeed in making clear to themselves.⁴⁵ Kant's suggestion, then, is that the idea is clear neither to the original thinker nor to his followers, who are not necessarily able to discern the idea in a clearer light.

Marx is not himself clear about the concept of ideology or the way in which it applies to forms of philosophy. Obviously, he does not fully work out this concept in his writings. We have already noted that there is no detailed statement of his view of ideology in his corpus. The remarks we have mentioned above are unclear, ambiguous, and even mistaken. For instance, it is unclear why some people are prey to ideology whereas others are not. In order to make out his claim Marx has to show whether and how it is possible to escape from ideological distortion, as well as who can do so. There are further problems with the very idea of ideology. Marx's conception of ideology is intrinsically suspect since he seems to attribute something like a causal role to the social context.

We can paraphrase the claim as follows: The socially distorted social context continues to exist since it impedes our knowledge of it. But it is simpler, and arguably more plausible, to hold that the social context does nothing, since it is not a subject and only subjects act.⁴⁶ Now it would be difficult to argue that our view of the social world is never distorted. The point of the Marxian concept of ideology is to explain this distortion by relating it to capitalism. But if our view of our surroundings is distorted, it is easier to attribute that distortion to ourselves, to our failure to inquire more deeply into social reality, to our tendencies to accept as true interpretations of our surroundings corresponding to what we do not, in fact, know but would like to believe.

Obviously, Marx holds that some forms of philosophy, such as Hegelian idealism and the views of certain Young Hegelians, suf-

fer from ideological distortion. Unlike the frequent Marxist claim that philosophy as such is mere ideology, Marx does not hold that philosophy as such in all its forms is necessarily distorted. We can, hence, infer that for Marx the distinction between true and false forms of social theory, that is, types of philosophy that provide correct and erroneous readings of the social context, is located within philosophy. From Marx's angle of vision, this distinction separates nonideological from ideological forms of philosophy.

If this is the case, then two results important for an understanding of his position follow immediately. First, it is clear that Marx neither claims nor needs to claim that philosophy as such is ideology since his quarrel is with certain types of philosophy only. Second, it is entirely consistent to acknowledge Marx's notion of ideology and to assert a philosophical status for his position. On obscure grounds, generations of Marxists have held that Marxism is continuous with Marx's view, and that philosophy is ideology. But this conclusion neither follows from nor is consistent with Marx's thought.

Marx never claims extraphilosophic, scientific status for his own position; but a claim of this kind has often, indeed routinely, been made in his name.⁴⁷ If we grant that Marx's position is philosophy, then the problem of how to characterize it becomes important. This is a question that has occupied generations of Marxist thinkers, who have offered a variety of responses. It is well known that Hegel desired to take up in his own thought all that was of value in the preceding philosophical tradition. In the same way, Marx obscurely indicated, in closely Hegelian fashion, that his own thought differed in kind from Hegel's, whose truth it preserved.⁴⁸ An effort to characterize the nature of Marxian philosophy, which surpasses the limits of the present discussion, would need to consider three themes in Marx's texts: his critique of other positions, particularly the early, detailed criticism of Hegel's thought; the few metatheoretical passages in scattered writings

where Marx reflects on the idea of acceptable theory, above all in the introduction to the *Grundrisse* and the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*; and the way in which Marx proceeded in his writings, particularly in *Capital*, his unfinished masterpiece.

Then there is the rather different issue of how Marxism has understood Marx's views of philosophy and ideology. With respect to ideology there is a significant, in fact crucial, difference between understanding Marx's view through an intra-philosophic distinction between ideological and nonideological forms of philosophy, and the frequent Marxist claim of a difference in kind between philosophy and Marxism as science. Clearly, Marx's intraphilosophic distinction is compatible with the traditional philosophic concern with philosophy as science present in the tradition as least as early as Plato. In our time this idea has been restated most forcefully by Husserl⁴⁹ and clearly denied by his pupil Heidegger.⁵⁰ From Marx's angle of vision, we can say that an ideological form of philosophy falls short of the claim to truth in virtue of its nonscientific status. The correlative claim, that philosophy is true, would imply that it is science in the traditional philosophic sense of the term.

At this late date, it is no longer clear that philosophy ought still to long for completion in the realization of some form of the Platonic idea of the science of sciences.⁵¹ It is now too late, after the rise of modern science and its separation from philosophy, for philosophy to continue its claim to be science. At best, as Husserl above all recognized, philosophy can be rigorous, hence "scientific." Clearly, the traditional link between philosophy and science is sharply and irrevocably broken in Marxism, which has always sought to distinguish between philosophy, understood as ideology, and itself, regarded as science. The result is a significant displacement that distinguishes Marxism, that body of thought that has long claimed to speak in Marx's name, from the theory in whose name it claims to speak. Unlike Marx, who discerned a distinction

between ideological and nonideological conceptions within the wider genus of philosophy, for Marxism this distinction separates philosophy itself, in all its forms, from Marxism, more precisely from Marxist science.

Whatever else it is, Marxism is not, or not in any simple fashion, the science of Marx's views. This does not mean that Marxism is unrelated to Marx's position, or that it is merely a series of misunderstandings concerning his thought.⁵² Marx and Marxism have much in common, but there are significant differences that we ignore at our peril.⁵³ A cardinal difference between Marx and Marxism concerns their respective analyses of the relation of philosophy to ideology. Accordingly, the next step in the discussion is to show that Marxism, whose very existence depends on its claimed continuity to Marx, has traditionally offered a view of the relation of philosophy to ideology that is essentially different from the view discernable within Marx's position.

CHAPTER TWO

Philosophy and Science, Ideology and Truth

AS THE FIRST STEP IN THE DISCUSSION of the conceptual background of Lukács's Marxism, the preceding chapter examined Marx's views of philosophy and ideology. Examination of Marx's writings, particularly his critique of Hegel, led to two conclusions. First, neither his critique of absolute idealism nor his notion of ideology is inconsistent with an acceptance of at least some kinds of philosophy as a source of knowledge of the social context. Second, neither his critique of absolute idealism nor his notion of ideology is incompatible with the interpretation of his own theory as a form of philosophy. The importance of these conclusions will emerge below in the discussion of Lukács's view, with particular attention to the characteristic Marxist rejection of philosophy in general as ideology in favor of an understanding of Marxism as an unspecified form of science.

There is an obvious displacement between Marx's intra-philosophic analysis of some forms of philosophy as ideology and the Marxist application of this notion to philosophy as such. Marxism typically redescribes Marx's distinction between speculative idealism and other forms of philosophy as a difference be-

tween philosophy and Marxist science. Whereas Marx regarded a single philosophical species as ideological, Marxism extends this inference to the genus. The view that Marxism is a science different in kind from philosophy is deeply rooted in the Marxist discussion. Yet there is neither unanimity nor even widespread agreement about how to describe Marxist science. There is an important difference of opinion in the Marxist literature concerning the nature of Marxist science ranging over its interpretation as critique (Korsch), antihumanism (Althusser), social theory (Habermas), theory of history (Cohen), analysis of commodity structure (Lukács), and so on.¹

To understand the importance of the Marxist displacement of Marx's thought from the status of philosophy to science, where philosophy and science are held to be incompatible, we will need to consider its role within Marxism. Now, Marxism is a large and varied terrain, rarely explored in detail by non-Marxist thinkers. Within Marxism, there is a similar degree of heterogeneity, an equally broad spread of opinion on trivial and even fundamental issues, as is found within any other major intellectual movement. Like the representative of most, perhaps all, major conceptual approaches, Marxists display a wide range of conflicting views on any given issue. That this is not better known, that it is often held that all Marxists are staunch representatives of the same view, is no more nor less plausible than the similarly erroneous assertion that there is uniformity among all analytic philosophers or the conviction that all phenomenologists basically agree.

Although Marxists form a diverse group, they also share certain views in virtue of which they are, or can be said to be, or describe themselves as, Marxist. Obviously, one such characteristic is a concern for the thought of Karl Marx. But clearly, Marxists do not have a monopoly on an interest in Marx's thought. Nor does anyone who is interested in Marx qualify as a Marxist, since all kinds of people, many of whom would not make this claim for

themselves, are concerned with Marx, in about the same way as they are concerned with Aristotle or Plato, or Kant or Hegel.

Obviously, another such characteristic is the claim, which does not follow from a mere interest in Marx's thought, to be a Marxist. Much ink and not a little blood has been spilled on the question of who is a Marxist. In general, the answer to this question can only be given on political grounds. From the standpoint of so-called Marxist orthodoxy, a constantly changing point of view, the title has routinely been denied to those who failed to accept the views of those in power. In that sense, Marxism was somewhat like politics. When Ronald Reagan was the president of the United States, there was a period when, if one did not accept his restrictive views on right to life and other doctrines, one risked being excluded from playing an active role in the Republican Party. In roughly the same way, as the party line changed, those claiming to be Marxists have routinely been branded as right- or left-wing deviationists, excluded from the party, or even executed, for failure to accept an ever-changing set of views.

The political reasons for insisting on uniformity are obvious, if not particularly convincing. From a conceptual angle of vision, there seems no reason to deny the title of Marxist to anyone who claims it. In this sense, Marxism should be liberal, admitting anyone who desires to be a member. But it is unlike a club to which one may have to pay dues to belong, or a religion in which one might need to accept basic principles, or a country to which one might be required to swear allegiance or to perform certain tasks. A Marxist is someone who tries to think within the Marxist tradition, to carry forward a certain vision that derives more or less closely from Marx's theory and is, hence, in a greater or lesser degree continuous with it.

But merely to know that one can become a Marxist by so identifying oneself does not help us to pick out a body of thought or a perspective identified with Marxism. Now everything, or almost

everything, about Marxism is controversial. In itself, this is a sign that the basic problems have not been settled, that the movement is still intellectually alive. For present purposes we can say that, in general, Marxism is the intellectual and political movement centered more or less loosely around the thought of Karl Marx. Whether Marxism is a simple continuation of Marx's position, or whether, despite its claims to continuity, Marxism is largely discontinuous with the original Marxian impulse, is not only a matter of scholastic interest. This question is in fact vital to the understanding of Marxism, which derives its legitimacy from the claim to continue and to develop further Marx's thought—in Lenin's phrase—as the science of Marx's view.

However we understand Marxism, it is clear that this movement begins in the thought of Friedrich Engels, the first Marxist. The association between Marx and Engels began in the early 1840s and continued until Marx's death in 1883. For various reasons, including the close association of these two writers, the fact that both collaborated on occasion, the tardy publication of certain of Marx's early writings (for instance, the "Paris Manuscripts," the *Grundrisse*), and Engels's relatively more accessible style of writing, there has long been a tendency to consider their views as forming a single theoretical entity.

This tendency was accentuated by further factors, including the abusive use of the hyphen in reference to Marx and Engels as the norm in eastern Europe and elsewhere under the heading of Marx-Engels, or at different times, Marx-Engels-Lenin, Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, and so on, the publication of their collected writings under the single, hyphenated name Marx-Engels, and the fact that certain influential early Marxists, notably Lenin, were more familiar with the writings of Engels than of Marx.¹

Since the 1930s as important but previously unavailable material began to appear, obvious and significant differences in the views of Marx and Engels have been noticed. The suggestion is

clear that the typical assertion of a seamless web between Marx and Marxism is illusory at best. In the 1990s that assertion can only be made for political purposes, in order to enjoy the prestige that follows from the claim of orthodoxy, through an alleged continuity with the ideas of the founder of an authorized form of thought that in turn confers legitimacy on those who are orthodox.

Engels, who continues to derive his own stature as a coequal founder of the new world view from his close association with Marx, did nothing to impede, in fact acted to deepen, this illusion. Engels accurately stated that his colleague, whom he eulogized as "the greatest living thinker"³ did what he (Engels) could not have done and he did only what Marx could have done without him. "Lately, repeated reference has been made to my share in this theory, and so I can hardly avoid saying a few words here to settle this particular point. I cannot deny that both before and during the forty years' collaboration with Marx I had a certain independent share in laying the foundations, and more particularly in elaborating the theory. But the greater part of its leading basic principles, particularly in the realm of economics and history, and, above all, its final, clear formulation, belong to Marx."⁴ David McLellan, a qualified observer, believes this claim is too modest.⁵ In fact, this statement is highly misleading. For it suggests, in a way that has, unfortunately, been decisive in the reception of Marx's thought, particularly within Marxism, that it is Engels who was the philosopher since Marx was either an economist, a historian, or both.

Another important factor in the tendency to conflate Marx and Marxism is Engels's characteristic depiction of their supposedly joint position. Engels constantly portrayed himself as an equal partner in the development of the view shared by Marx and himself, for which he was a tireless propagandist. A flagrant example of Engels's tendency to conflate—in fact to fuse—his own views

with Marx's in a manner since largely followed occurs in his polemical work *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (1878), widely, and not inaccurately, known as *Anti-Dühring*. Two years after Marx's death, in the preface to the second edition of this book (1885), Engels speaks of "the dialectical method and of the communist world outlook represented by Marx and myself."⁶ After correctly indicating that Marx was more responsible than himself for the genesis of the view, he remarks, in a manner tending to legitimize his claim to present a common world view, that "it was of course self-understood between us that this exposition of mine should not be issued without his knowledge. I read the whole manuscript to him before it was printed."⁷ In this way, Engels's initial, modest indication of Marx's preponderant role is quickly and significantly transformed into an assertion that makes no distinction in their respective contributions. An obvious example is his reference to "the laws which Hegel first developed in all-embracing but mystical form, and which we made it our aim to strip of this mystic form and to bring clearly before the mind in their complete simplicity and universality."⁸

Beyond the reasons already cited, and the close association between Engels and Marx over many years, Engels's ability to confate his views with Marx's was aided by two additional factors: his role as Marx's literary executor, the fact that after Marx's death he was in a position to state what both meant in their supposedly joint view in an authoritative manner, and his intrinsically clear writing style. As Marx's literary executor, he edited the major portion of the manuscript of *Capital* that Marx left unpublished at his death, including volumes two and three. Obviously, this fact meant that Engels shared in the prestige accruing to the publication for Marx of unpublished portions of Marx's writings.

Engels's interpretation of the meaning of the position—a position that by implication represented a common theoretical frame-

work—lent additional credence to his role as a cofounder of the new world view. After Marx's death, Engels wrote a series of letters to clarify certain points in the theory.⁹ An instance is his discussion of the difficult question of the relation between economic and noneconomic factors within the Marxist perspective in a well-known letter to Joseph Bloch, in the course of which he speaks of himself and Marx in the same conceptual breath as it were.¹⁰ "Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it."¹¹

The stylistic differences between Engels and Marx were even more important in assuring Engels's role in the reception of Marxism. The simple, but often simplistic way in which he presented frequently complex philosophical issues meant that his writings quickly assumed authoritative stature. Marx was the deeper and more original mind, but his writing is usually difficult and almost never felicitous. Engels's obvious ability to provide an accessible form of the views attributed to Marx meant that they mainly became known and continue to be known through Engels's writings. Obviously, the procedure of restricting acquaintance with a thinker's views to someone else's writings about them is rather odd. It is a little like consulting James Boswell to learn about the contents of Dr. Samuel Johnson's dictionary. Unquestionably, one would be better off to read the dictionary. But generations of readers have studied Engels's texts to learn about Marx's position. For this and other reasons, Engels has had a more significant effect on the reception of the Marxian legacy than did Marx. Whatever the relation of Marx to Marxism might be—and it is often distant on crucial points—this is a movement whose defining influence and origins lie in Engels's thought.¹²

Engles described the canonical form of Marxism in a large number of articles, pamphlets, reviews, and in a smaller number of books. Some of his writings provide a simplified codification of an

allegedly joint perspective; others are part of his attempt to extend this supposedly shared perspective to new domains. As example of the latter is his unfinished work, *The Dialectics of Nature*, which follows Hegel in reinterpreting nature from a dialectical angle of vision foreign to Marx.¹³ Engels's best-known and most influential exposition of the Marxist position is *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. This book, which initially appeared as a series of articles in *Die Neue Zeit* in 1886, offers a classical Marxist statement of the Marxist view of the relation of Marxism to philosophy. In the short foreword, Engels points to the famous preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, where "Marx relates how the two of us . . . set about working out in common 'the opposition of our view'—the materialist conception of history which was worked out especially by Marx—to the ideological view of German philosophy, in fact to settle accounts with our previous philosophical conscience."¹⁴

In the context of an exposition of a position supposedly common to Marx and Engels, this statement is important for four reasons. First, it indicates that this work is an account of a position due to Marx and Engels's joint elaboration. Although this is not, in fact, the case, it appears natural to infer that in this work Engels presents a position common to both himself and Marx. Second, since Engels had a share in the formulation of the position, by implication his account of it is authoritative. Nothing in this statement provides grounds to believe that Marx and Engels differ with respect to the view they supposedly worked out in common. Third, the statement suggests that Marx and Engels at one time favored German philosophy, but they later went beyond it in some unspecified manner. This suggests that Marx's thought is extra-philosophical and that Marxism is not itself philosophy or philosophic, but something else located "beyond" philosophy. Fourth, Engels here clearly labels German philosophy as such, not merely a form of it, as ideological. It follows that the alternative theory,

in principle jointly elaborated by Marx and Engels, or Marxism, cannot be philosophy; it must be something else.

According to Engels, Marxism is science, or the science of dialectical materialism, a view he expounds in the fourth and last chapter of the work. The intrinsic opposition between idealism as ideology and materialism as science is further heightened if we note that the term *Ausgang* in the title of the work, here translated as "outcome," in fact means "exit" or "way out" in ordinary German. Engels reports that his purpose in this book is to provide "a short, connected account of our relation to the Hegelian philosophy, of our point of departure as well as of our separation from it."¹⁵

This report is doubly significant: as another instance of the self-congratulatory Marxist tendency to conflate Marxism with Marx's position, and as an assertion that the joint view of Marx and Marxism lies somewhere beyond philosophy. The latter point is reinforced by the title of this book. Note that like other Young Hegelians, who held that philosophy reached a high water mark and an end in Hegel's thought, Engels's title suggests that the way forward after Hegel can only lie in an "advance" beyond philosophy (which Engels simply equates with ideology) to science.

Engels's philosophical sensitivity was primitive at best. He lacked Marx's philosophical background as well as Marx's sophisticated appreciation of the intricacies of philosophical ideas. Engel's propensity to look for simple solutions to complex problems did not prevent or even impede him from routinely claiming to come to grips with, and to overcome, Hegel's position. His works are filled with comments on such topics as Hegel's position, the relation of Marx's thought to Hegel's, dialectic and its relation to nature, and the relation of idealism and materialism. For the most part, his statements were confident and simplistic, and tended to portray the history of philosophy as culminating in Hegel's thought, which in turn was definitively superseded in Marx's posi-

tion. According to Engels, Hegel's position remained on an abstract plane. It was left for Marx to make the transition to the real world, and, in this way, to grasp the laws of history and society. Engels thought of dialectic as central to the new world view, in principle opposed to metaphysics.

Although presented as a form of thought beyond philosophy, Engels's view of Marxism is typical of the antimodern, anti-metaphysical efforts to surpass the philosophical tradition in a new, supposedly unprecedented form of thought.¹⁶ For Engels what came to be known as Marxism was an essentially anti-metaphysical form of thought that transcended idealism in order to grasp the truth about society in a dialectical analysis that began with Hegel but left Hegel behind. There is an obvious similarity between Engels's view of Marxism and Heidegger's approach to Being. Both positions are antimetaphysical, antimodernistic, and depend for their claims on the elaboration of a new form of thought finally said to differ in kind from philosophy.¹⁷

Engels's presentation of the new Marxist world view in his study of Ludwig Feuerbach is schematic at best. The book is divided into four chapters, concerning the historical transition "From Hegel to Feuerbach," followed by accounts of the opposition of "Idealism and Materialism" and "Feuerbach's Philosophy of Religion and Ethics," and ending in an exposition of "Dialectical Materialism."

In Engel's discussion, Feuerbach assumes a key role as the transitional figure who began a basic change of perspective, an instance of what Thomas S. Kuhn later called a paradigm change.¹⁸ Engels believes that this change occurs in the progression from idealism, which reaches a peak in Hegel's thought, to materialism, whose high point occurs in the new angle of vision represented by Marx and himself. This interpretation offers a clear but limited analogy with Hegel's view. It is well known that Hegel voluntarily interpreted the entire prior history of philosophy as reaching a

high water mark in his own theory in the form of a new synthesis; Engels makes a similar claim for Marxism as elaborating the truth of prior thought in a new theory that surpasses mere philosophy to reach science.

The limit of the analogy is visible in their basically different ways of understanding the relation of their own views to prior thought. Hegel regards the prior tradition as composed of a series of partial, incomplete anticipations of a fully correct theory. His announced intention is to take up in his own synthesis all that is of value in the preceding philosophical discussion. For Engels the history of philosophy has no redeeming insights since philosophy itself is deprived of insight into social reality. He believes that the philosophical tradition is significant only in its contribution to the formulation of the Marxist world view. In that sense, he is close to a wide variety of thinkers in the modern tradition (such as Descartes, Kant, Wittgenstein, W. V. O. Quine, the members of the Vienna Circle, and so on) who insist on the separation between systematic and historical approaches to philosophy.¹⁹ Like such thinkers, Engels maintains that philosophy can best advance by being freed from its past. But there is a difference in the relation of the new theory to earlier views. For Hegel, an adequate philosophy, namely his own, needs to build upon earlier views, much as Newton claimed to stand on the shoulders of giants. Thinkers in the modern tradition who hold that genuine philosophy can only be systematic nevertheless maintain a faith in philosophy. Although not a skeptic, Engels has entirely lost the philosophical faith. In his view, the truth of the philosophical tradition is that it has no truth. According to Engels, truth is not to be had in another, supposedly adequate form of philosophy; it can only be had on a plane beyond philosophy, in a theory such as Marxism that has left philosophy behind. Hence, the analogy between Engels and Hegel is finally misleading. For Hegel, philosophy supposedly reaches a summit in his own position, which is the culmination of

the philosophical tradition; whereas Engels holds that philosophy comes to an end in Hegel's thought, but is completed in the new world view beyond the philosophical tradition. In a word, in Engels's own Young Hegelian self-understanding, philosophy and the philosophical tradition reaches its terminus in Hegel's thought—a claim Hegel never makes, in fact denies—but reaches its fruition only beyond the philosophical tradition in the form of Marxist science.²⁰

The claim that philosophy finds its fulfillment in an extra-philosophic form of science is a further development of the traditional philosophical insistence that philosophy is science. The importance of science for philosophy is its supposedly privileged status as the model of knowledge. What Husserl called the secret longing of modern times is specifically reaffirmed by Kant in his assertion that philosophy can only be system.²¹ The idea of philosophy as science (*Wissenschaft*) is a central theme in the writings of Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Hegel. But the rise of modern science in the seventeenth century and its progressive emancipation from philosophy has made it harder to maintain that philosophy is or even can be science in any simple sense. Some observers have regarded the separation between philosophy and science as creating the need to choose between them. Some among them, for instance, Heidegger, have held to philosophy and abandoned the effort to make of it a science. Engels, on the contrary, abandons philosophy in his insistence on science. In this sense, his position resembles the widespread tendency in analytic circles, particularly in analytic philosophy of science, to present philosophical arguments for science as the only source of knowledge, for physics as the main form of science to which others can be reduced, and so on.

Engels holds that the new world view is not philosophy, but extends the philosophical tradition on the scientific plane. His argument that Marxism is a science, but philosophy is ideology, develops on the soil already tilled by Heinrich Heine.²² Heine, the

great German poet, studied with Hegel and was a friend of Marx. In *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, Heine, who spent much of his life in exile in Paris, presented contemporary German thought to the French public. Here he argued two points that are later taken up by Engels. First, he maintains, following Hegel, that modern German philosophy arose from the liberating effect of Martin Luther, which was then transferred from religion into philosophy. Second, he claims that not only German philosophy, but philosophy in general, comes to a peak and to an end in Hegel's thought. The view that modern philosophy arose in the revolt against dogmatism is expressed by Hegel in the identification of the so-called Protestant principle of independent thought in Descartes, whom he regards as the first modern philosopher.²³ The idea that philosophy as such comes to a high water mark and to a conclusion in Hegel's thought was widely shared by the Young Hegelians in general. It is worth noting that none of these, or almost none, was willing to accept the label of philosopher.

Engels shares the Young Hegelian view that it is no longer possible to pursue the road taken by philosophy, which leads up to the Hegelian system. Like the other Young Hegelians, he maintains that philosophy reaches a high point and an end in Hegel's thought for two reasons, only one of which was consciously intended by Hegel.²⁴ First, Engels maintains that when Hegel for the first time grasped the entire progressive development leading up to the present moment, he consciously ended the philosophical quest understood as absolute truth to be reached by a single individual. His way of reading Hegel is similar to some claims that knowledge is a collective enterprise that cannot be finally brought to an end by an individual.²⁵ On this point, Engels's interpretation of Hegel's position is mistaken. Hegel held that later thinkers build on the accomplishments of their predecessors through a diachronic form of dialogue. Although he linked conceptual progress by individuals to the progress of the species as a whole, he did not hold that

philosophical progress followed from synchronic discussion, as the result of a team effort, so to speak.

Second, Engels maintains that Hegel has shown us the way out of "the labyrinth of 'systems' to real, positive knowledge of the world."²⁶ There is a clear suggestion that systematic philosophy is not knowledge, or is not the highest type of knowledge. It follows that Hegel's thought is to be rejected because it is systematic philosophy. Hegel's contribution does not lie in his own position; rather, it lies in pointing beyond itself to something of greater worth, located in the conceptual space beyond philosophy, that is, Marxism. From this perspective, Hegel's contribution is to point beyond philosophy to another form of knowledge more adequate than that available from the philosophical angle of vision.

Engels's observation combines a criticism of system and an uncritical acceptance of the standard Young Hegelian view of Hegel's thought as the peak of the philosophical tradition. The Kantian emphasis on system criterion of scientific philosophy determined the later German idealist discussion, but was decisively rejected by later thinkers, including Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.²⁷ Engels's objection to Hegel's thought because of its systematic form rests on a simultaneous, uncritical acceptance of the Kantian claim that philosophy must be system and the standard criticism of systematicity. Even were absolute idealism the highest form of systematicity, it would only follow that philosophy as such must be rejected if the Kantian conception of philosophy is accepted.

Engels's presentation of Hegel is obviously linked to the latter's view of his position. Hegel held that the critical philosophy was insufficiently critical; its examination of the conditions of the possibility of objects of experience failed to think its own possibility. He believed that fully critical thought, and hence the goal of knowledge in the full sense, was only attained in his own position. As Hegel reads Kant, speculative idealism continues and completes the effort begun by the critical philosophy to demonstrate the con-

ditions of knowledge in general. If the philosophical tradition is concerned with the Kantian problem, then by implication, in thinking through to the end the conditions of knowledge, in the completion of the task of a critical theory of philosophy, Hegel brings the philosophical tradition to the end. The difference is that whereas Hegel thought that the critical philosophy could be completed within philosophy, Engels maintains that the effort of the Hegelian philosophy necessarily leads beyond philosophy itself.

Obviously, this kind of argument depends on the ability to differentiate philosophy as a stage in the growth of knowledge from one further removed and supposedly beyond it. Engels describes the distinction between philosophic knowledge and so-called real, positive knowledge in various ways—as the difference between ideology and science, and above all as a distinction between idealism and materialism. He regards the latter distinction between idealism and materialism as central to philosophy. “The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being.”²⁸ Clearly, Engels understands idealism and materialism as contraries that divide the entire conceptual universe of discourse between them. All possible philosophical views belong to one or the other of these contraries, and there are no philosophical views that cannot be located within this dichotomous framework.

In this respect, there is a limited analogy between Engels’s and Hegel’s understanding of philosophy. Hegel’s comprehension of the philosophical tradition as a series of approaches to the problem of knowledge is echoed in Engels’s understanding of the so-called watershed problem. But the echo is distant since Hegel regards prior views as incomplete, hence partially true anticipations of a completed theory of knowledge. For Hegel, a partially true view is also partially false, but is neither true nor false in any simple sense. A further result is to commit to a relativistic view of knowledge that understands claims for truth as relative to a par-

ticular categorial framework.²⁹ Engels, on the contrary, applies his distinction to refuse all forms of idealism as such. For Engels and his Marxist successors, materialism is the minimal criterion of possible truth. According to Engels and Marxism in general, truth is not a matter of degree, but of kind. Either a view is a form of materialism, and hence true or it is a form of idealism and accordingly false; there is no other, third possibility. The result is a return to the old, dichotomous view of truth. According to this view, exemplified in the Kantian ethical theory, based on the law of the excluded middle, truth is not relative, but absolute. In Kant's view, either an action is autonomous, and hence moral, or heteronymous, and hence not moral. As for Engels, for Kant there is no third possibility.

The claim that all forms of philosophy and even thought are types of either idealism or materialism depends on the definition of these two basic philosophical approaches and on the viability of the distinction between them.³⁰ Engels proposes two definitions of materialism in his book: the view that nature is the sole reality³¹ and the further view that it is necessary to sacrifice every idealist fancy that cannot be brought into accord with the facts.³² For Engels, "materialism" is "empirical reality," the contrary of idealism, a view of the priority of matter over spirit. There is an obvious affinity here with contemporary emergentist approaches to the mind-body problem as well as to positivistic appeals to an empirical criterion of meaning, or forms of physicalism and materialism that invariably privilege the empirical.³³ Both views of materialism, namely as based on the empirically real and as the contrary of idealism, are well represented in the contemporary discussion.

It is useful to say a word about Engels's comprehension of idealism, since it is typical of that found in later Marxism and in the wider philosophical tradition. The term "idealism" is widely but imprecisely employed in the philosophical discussion to refer to an extraordinary variety of views, whose relation, even family resem-

blance, is not always clear. Representatives of forms of idealism range from Plato over George Berkeley to Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in the German tradition, to British idealists such as H. H. Joachim, T. H. Green, and F. H. Bradley, and more recently to Nicholas Rescher.³⁴ In his criticism of idealism, Engels is primarily concerned with the German idealist tradition since Kant, in particular with Hegel. The latter's comprehension of idealism is difficult to interpret. It is routine to speak of Hegel's "absolute idealism," but to the best of my knowledge he never uses this term to refer to his own position.³⁵

As is frequent in the philosophical tradition, Engels's opposition to idealism rests on a caricatural view of this doctrine. It is unclear that any idealist, with the possible exception of Berkeley, ever expressly held that mind is prior to empirical reality.³⁶ Berkeley, who is usually understood as an immaterialist, denied the existence of material objects in favor of ideas or sensations as perceptual objects. His view is close to recent theories of knowledge based on sense data. But since Kant's refutation of idealism, a doctrine identified with this name has routinely and often been criticized on the grounds that it denies empirical reality, either because the idea alone is real, or because it is more real than the object, or because the object is in some sense said to be deduced from the idea of it.³⁷ In fact, Kant, who argued in favor of transcendental idealism, offered separate refutations of idealism understood as the denial of the existence of objects of outer sense, distinguished from dualism, which maintains the possible certainty of such objects;³⁸ and idealism, or material idealism, which declares the existence of objects in space outside us to be merely doubtful and indemonstrable (supposedly Descartes's view), or false and impossible (allegedly Berkeley's doctrine).³⁹

Engels stresses the importance of the distinction between ideology and science for knowledge of society. We need to replace the cult of the abstract man with the science of real men and women

and their historical development.⁴⁰ Just as with respect to nature natural science has taken the place of the philosophy of nature, so with respect to the social world a science of society should substitute for philosophy.⁴¹ Ideology arises at a number of points within society: in the state as an independent power, in religion, and in philosophy. In each case, the connection between ideas and the material context, which exists, is obscured or hidden.⁴² Engels believes that philosophy is merely a form of ideology, occupied with thoughts as composed of independent entities, which develop according to immanent laws.⁴³

Engels's view of ideology, which underlies his critique of philosophy, is problematic. He regards ideology as the view that ideas are determined by other ideas, and he further holds that in the last analysis ideas are determined by material life conditions and hence cannot be independent of them.⁴⁴ The view that ideas are determined by other ideas is widely current in contemporary philosophy, for instance, in Richard Rorty's conception of epistemological behaviorism⁴⁵ and Jacques Derrida's notion of textuality. Both are versions of the traditional claim that philosophy occurs in, but is not of, time. But it cannot be the case that ideas are determined by other ideas only as well as by material life conditions. The traditional view of philosophy as a form of thought independent of the surrounding social context is incompatible with an insistence on any form of a contextualist view.

There is a further, deeper problem concerning the compatibility of Engels's distinctions between materialism and idealism, and science and ideology. The former is an intraphilosophic distinction concerning incompatible approaches to the basic problem of philosophy. The latter differentiates philosophy from another, supposedly higher form of knowledge. If science and philosophy exclude each other, and if materialism and idealism are types of philosophy, it cannot be the case that as a form of nonideology Marxism is science but as nonidealism it is materialism. In sum,

Marxism, according to Engels's own distinctions, is both philosophy and beyond philosophy, which is absurd.

This tension is deeply rooted in Engels's view: he seems to be recommending a form of materialism, which is still philosophy, albeit of a different kind; but when he describes philosophy as ideology—presumably including also materialism in that category—he seems to be proposing science as a form of thought that goes beyond ideology to grasp truth. This obvious tension, which continues to echo through later Marxism, concerns the status of a view that, as materialism, is merely another form of philosophy, but that as science has allegedly left philosophy behind.

Engels utilizes this same series of distinctions to depict the history of philosophy as culminating in Marx's position. Feuerbach is a key transitional figure, who provides a materialist critique of Hegel. But in other respects Feuerbach remains an idealist, unable finally, despite his own materialist tendencies, to effect the transition to materialism, hence incapable of leaving idealism behind. Feuerbach's residual idealism is evident, for instance, in his views of religion and ethics.⁴⁶ His contribution is to prepare the way for the hegemony of materialism, even if he finally maintains an ambiguous position with respect to it.⁴⁷ Moreover, Feuerbach's own, mechanical form of materialism is inadequate.⁴⁸ The acceptable form of materialism must be dialectical; it must grasp the general laws of nature.⁴⁹

Engels's analysis of Feuerbach resembles his analysis of Hegel. Feuerbach's incomplete transition from idealism to materialism, or transition to an unacceptable form of materialism, is important in pointing toward Marx's view as the *terminus ad quem* of thought about society. We recall that Hegel regarded his own position as completing Kant's critical revolution in philosophy. Similarly, Engels presents Marx's position as carrying further the conceptual transition begun by Feuerbach in the fulfillment of Hegel's philosophy on an extraphilosophic plane. This point depends on an as-

sumed parallel between nature and history. Just as natural science has replaced the philosophy of nature (*Naturphilosophie*), so Marx has provided us with a science of history, or historical science, which expels philosophy from the field of history. "This conception [i.e., the Marxist conception of history—T. R.], however, puts an end to philosophy in the realm of history, just as the dialectical conception of nature made all natural philosophy both unnecessary and impossible."⁵⁰

Engels's view of Marx's position as the legitimate successor to Hegel's contains three discrete claims that characteristically presuppose the truth of the Young Hegelian reading of Hegel's position as the summit of the philosophical tradition. First, philosophy is either inadequate, or at least less adequate than Marxism. Second, since the Marxist conception of history is unquestionably superior to that of philosophy, the latter no longer has a legitimate role to play in this domain. Third, the only place for philosophy is in the realm to which it has always been confined, namely, pure thought.

Engels's intent is to provide a clear contrast between Marx and Hegel. Marx surpasses Hegel though his discovery of the solution of the problems with which the latter was concerned. The intrinsic weakness of prior philosophy, including its highest form in Hegel's position, lies either in the ignorance of the way thought, including philosophy, is determined by the material life conditions, which follows from putting thought before matter, so to speak, and not conversely; or it lies in the nonscientific substitution of an abstract approach for the scientific determination of the laws of the historical process.⁵¹

The link between these two partially incompatible descriptions lies in the assertion that philosophy, or what has until now been the highest form of philosophy, is unable to resolve the problems with which it is concerned; these problems are solved through a new, higher theory, which is not a different kind of philosophy

opposed to idealism, but a science that is not itself philosophy. Through the turn to this new form of theory—here described as a different, nonideological, scientific conception of history based on the priority of being over thought—we find a claim for, but not yet-a justification of, the effort to drive a conceptual wedge between Marxism and prior thought, or—if Marx's view is philosophy—between philosophy and the history of philosophy.

Engels fails to demonstrate his view that Marx resolves the problems of philosophy on an extraphilosophic claim through a science of history. It is one thing to suggest that prior forms of thought fall short of a full account. Every thinker of importance makes this, or an analogous, claim about the views of his predecessors. But if, as Engels constantly presupposes, philosophy reaches an unsurpassable peak in speculative idealism, he needs to make another, stronger claim in order to make out his argument for the superiority of Marx's theory over Hegel's. His point is a generalization of Marx's objection to speculative idealism as being abstract. Engels now extends this criticism against a form of philosophy to philosophy itself. In principle, earlier views could not have been successful since they were intrinsically incapable of surpassing the stage of mere abstract thought in order to know social reality. It is, then, no accident that prior forms of philosophy or philosophy itself have failed. Now this assertion remains only an assertion if it is not accompanied by a detailed justification. What Engels does not provide, and what no Marxist before Lukács seems to have offered, is a detailed argument for the alleged inability of non-Marxist, or so-called bourgeois, thought to know social reality. In order to understand the proximate source of Lukács's approach, and hence to grasp the argument he makes, it will be useful now to turn to neo-Kantianism, in which it originates.

CHAPTER THREE

Epistemological Irrationality

ENGELS'S FORMULATION OF THE MARXIST VIEW that philosophy is ideology suggests two epistemological conclusions. First, from the perspective of a nonidealistic, materialistic science Marxism surpasses ideology to attain truth. Second, philosophy in general is intrinsically unable to grasp its object. Now, if epistemological claims are to be accorded philosophical weight, they must be argued on an epistemological level, not merely asserted. According to Engels and later Marxists, the purported philosophical failure to provide knowledge derives from its bourgeois, or idealistic, character, in virtue of which it is ideology, not science. Here as elsewhere, for Marxism the terms "bourgeois thought" and "idealism" are close synonyms. Relying on a form of contextualism, Marxism routinely holds that bourgeois, or idealist, philosophy becomes ideology because of its relation to the social context.

Stated in this schematic way, the Marxist view of non-Marxism is unconvincing. The obvious difficulty with this view lies in the application of a contextualist vision to limit the knowledge claims for non-Marxism, but not for Marxism. If, as Marxism claims, the relation of idealism to the social context undercuts its claims to know, why is this not the case for Marxism as well? The specific nature of the Marxist claim is also difficult to determine. As we

have noted in the discussion of Engels's view, Marxism's dual distinctions, that is, science and ideology, and materialism and idealism, lead to an ambiguous interpretation of the difference between Marxism and non-Marxism. In practice, numerous Marxists, including Engels, have tended to treat these distinctions as synonymous in order to refer to an allegedly basic, but ambiguous difference between Marxism and non-Marxism. This practice is difficult to justify on theoretical grounds, since it conflates an intraphilosophic and an extraphilosophic distinction. Materialism and idealism are different types of philosophy, whereas "science," as Marxism uses the term, means "nonphilosophy" and "ideology" refers to "the status of the claims to know."

Lukács's Marxism reproduces the ambiguity of Engels's view, which is typical of Marxism. The distinction between their forms of Marxism is more a matter of degree than of kind. Engels mainly stresses the allegedly scientific character of Marxism as well as the supposedly scientific nature of Marx's theory. Lukács's philosophical background is incomparably better than Engels's. He possesses a sensitivity to philosophical nuance unsurpassed in the Marxist tradition. Perhaps for this reason, although he also refers to the scientific status of Marx and Marxism, Lukács for the most part insists on the philosophical superiority of the Marxist perspective. In a word, Lukács defends the Marxist claim for the epistemological superiority of materialism over idealism with the significant difference that he is able to acknowledge, as Engels is not, the philosophical character of Marx and much of Marxism. Lukács's writings represent the first and still most developed effort to demonstrate the frequent Marxist claim of the epistemological superiority of Marxism over classical German idealism.

It is usual to stress the unusually wide philosophical background of Lukács's thought.¹ It is less usual to note the crucial contribution of Kant and German neo-Kantianism for the constitution of his initial Marxist position. Although, with Korsch, Lukács,

is widely and justly known as the creator of Hegelian Marxism, his Marxism is deeply dependent on insights derived from the Kantian tradition. It is not well known that Lukács's attempted demonstration of the philosophical superiority of Marxism over classical German philosophy rests on his creative reappropriation of selected themes from German neo-Kantianism.

It is no accident that Lukács's Marxism is deeply dependent on Kantian themes broadly construed. His interest in Kant and the Kantian tradition is older than his interest in Marx and Marxism. This interest is one of the main threads connecting his pre-Marxist and Marxist periods. The influence of Kantianism on his thought is deeper than usually recognized. His first writings concerning literary criticism were already marked by an interest in Kant's aesthetics.² It is certainly no accident that both of his works on aesthetics from his pre-Marxist period, his major philosophical writings prior to his turn to Marxism, begin with the same closely Kantian question: "There are artworks; how are they possible?"³

The association in Lukács's Marxism between Marxism and neo-Kantianism, which at first glance may appear unusual, even strange, is, however, natural. Neo-Kantianism developed in two ways and in two places in Germany: as a philosophy of science in Marburg, and as a philosophy of culture and history in Heidelberg.⁴ Lukács studied in Heidelberg before the First World War. During this period, a main part of his work consisted in the preparation of two studies of aesthetics strongly influenced by German neo-Kantian thought.⁵ The Kantian element in both works was also strong. One scholar summarizes the difference between them as the early synthesis of vitalism (*Lebensphilosophie*) and Kantianism followed by an extreme, dualistic form of Kantianism.⁶ At that time, Lukács was personally acquainted with or even a friend of, such significant neo-Kantian thinkers as Rickert, Lask, Georg Simmel, and Max Weber. He only became converted to Marxism in December 1918. It is hardly surprising that he would make use

of his previously acquired knowledge in the service of his new faith.

There is a further, noncontingent reason that follows from the subject matter itself. There are only two ways to make out the Marxist claim that non-Marxist thought, which Marxists tend to equate with idealism, is incapable of knowing its object. Either this claim can be argued for each form of idealism, for each non-Marxist theory that arises; or it can be argued in general, in quasi-Kantian fashion, for all forms of non-Marxism as such. The obvious advantage of the latter, more general argument is that, if successful, it accounts for each instance of idealism. Hence, it is no longer necessary to make the same, or a similar, point for the superiority of Marxism with respect to each and every form of idealism.

There is a clear relation between the general argument for the superiority of Marxism over idealism and Kant's thought. The well-known aim of the celebrated Copernican Revolution, perhaps the most famous epistemological argument in modern philosophy, is to elucidate the conditions of the possibility of an knowledge whatsoever. The assertion that knowledge is possible if objects correspond to the categories of the mind is inseparable from the view that when this correspondence does not hold knowledge is impossible. We recall that Kant maintains that preceding forms of the theory of knowledge, such as empiricism or rationalism, failed because they were unable to demonstrate that thought was able to know its object.

There is an enormous difference in philosophical sophistication between Engels and Lukács. Engels understood Marxism as the science of history in principle uncognizable from the angle of vision of philosophic thought. But he failed to provide a demonstration of his claim, which remains as an unsupported assertion, in a word, as a profession of Marxist faith. Lukács, on the contrary, provides a complex philosophical analysis, in fact, a quasi-Kant-

ian, transcendental argument intended to demonstrate what Engels merely asserts.

The utility of neo-Kantianism for the sophisticated form of Marxism developed by Lukács lies in its concern with the Kantian question of the conditions of historical knowledge. It is well known that Kant was concerned with the conditions of knowledge of experience and objects. Kant's Copernican Revolution is intended to explain the possibility of knowledge as a function of the correspondence of objectivity to subjectivity. German neo-Kantians, particularly Lask, extended Kant's analysis to the problem of historical knowledge. Like Kant, the neo-Kantians maintained that certain approaches were incapable of demonstrating the correspondence of objectivity to subjectivity, and hence failed to lead to historical knowledge. Lukács understood Marxism as a historical approach to knowledge of the social context. The specific link between his Marxism and German neo-Kantianism lies in his extension of their assertion of the epistemological incapacity of certain forms of historical knowledge to classical German philosophy in general. In sum, although Lukács was trained and influenced by some of the leading neo-Kantian scholars, the decisive reason for its influence on his Marxism lies in his concern to employ neo-Kantian forms of argumentation to grasp and finally to discredit classical German philosophy.

Since the neo-Kantian debate on the problem of historical knowledge on which Lukács relies for the constitution of his Marxist position is not well known, we will need to examine it in some detail. It traverses a complex, little-known path leading up to Lask and Lukács, in the thought of such writers as Wilhelm Windelband and Rickert, Simmel, and Max Weber. As an aid in understanding the neo-Kantian approach to knowledge of the historical object, it will be useful to begin with some remarks about the relation of epistemology and the theory of history.

The widespread tendency to understand the modern philosophi-

cal tradition as beginning with Descartes is problematic. This identification obviously depends on a particular view of philosophy. In general, this reading of modern thought rests on Descartes's influential discovery of the foundationalist argument for knowledge. Other observers stress different aspects. Thus, Hegel locates the Cartesian contribution in the idea of unfettered thought, in the separation of reason and faith, in the so-called Protestant Principle.⁷ Richard H. Popkin argues that Pierre Bayle is the real founder of modern philosophy.⁸ Etienne Gilson stresses the continuity between the Cartesian view and earlier thought, principally Augustine and forms of scholasticism.⁹

For obvious reasons, the rise of modern epistemology preceded the emergence of a philosophical theory of history. Although Descartes is often described as the founder of modern philosophy, the relation between the Cartesian epistemological view and a conception of history is not often noted. The Cartesian breakthrough in knowledge is closely linked to a devaluation of the historical object.¹⁰ It cannot be overemphasized that for Descartes history is a mere *fabula mundi* deprived of epistemological status. Among succeeding philosophers, the anti-Cartesian Vico advanced a theory of historical knowledge. But the development of a theory of history in Vico's anti-Cartesian thought was not widely followed, and only later arose independently in the writings of David Hume and the German thinkers.

Kant's view of history develops gradually in his writings.¹¹ It is entirely lacking in his initial breakthrough to transcendental philosophy, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, as well as in the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*. In the *Critique of Judgment*, in the "Dialectic of Teleological Judgment," he addresses the antinomy between causal analysis and non causal analysis, such as the cause through freedom analyzed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹² He maintains that mere mechanism is insufficient to explain the actions of orga-

nized beings.¹³ He then reviews various explanations of the concept of purposiveness in nature before arguing that¹⁴ we cannot think of the purposiveness that must lie at the bottom of our cognition of the internal possibility of nature as other than the product of an intelligent cause. He clarifies this claim in the next paragraph¹⁵ in the remark that the concept of the purposiveness of nature is a subjective principle of reason for judgment. This principle is regulative but not constitutive, although necessarily valid for human judgment as though it were an objective principle. Kant claims that the result of his analysis is the reemergence of the original tension between mechanical and rational explanation's that requires us finally, because of the constitution of our reason, to subordinate explanation through mechanism to causality in accordance with purpose.¹⁶

Kant supplements his technical discussion of the epistemological aspect of the problem by a less technical account in a series of semipopular texts. His famous definition of maturity (*Mündigkeit*) in the essay "What Is Enlightenment?" (1784) suggests that the capacity for independent thought was only finally manifested in the critical philosophy (Kant's name for his position) at the end of a process of human development. At almost the same time, in another essay, "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" (1784), Kant held that each individual follows his or her own inclinations, but everything happens with respect to a natural but unknown goal.¹⁷ The history of human being is the sign of a secret plan for a fully constituted state;¹⁸ and the role of the philosopher is to discern and help fulfill this plan.¹⁹ Two years later, in an essay on the "Conjectural Beginning of Human History" (1786), he maintained that we should be content with Providence and with the course of human history considered as a whole.²⁰ He followed this up with a discussion of "The End of All Things" (1794), where he argued that wisdom concerning the ultimate purpose is not a human property; we should leave to Provi-

dence the means to realize its own goals.²¹ In a still later discussion of "Perpetual Peace" (1795), he maintained that the guarantee of perpetual peace is nature, whose aim we can see as producing a harmony among people against their will and through their discord.²² On this basis, he asserted that we have a duty to work toward the realization of a federation of nations that will provide perpetual peace.²³

Kant's remarks in the *Critique of Judgment* show that he did not entirely neglect the epistemological aspect of the problem of history. Nonetheless, his writings about history are primarily concerned with the realization of morality.²⁴ In that sense, they represent a further development of his concern, announced in his ethical writings, to envisage the possible conciliation of morality and happiness.²⁵ There is an obvious parallel between Kant and Marx on this point. Both thinkers are concerned less with knowledge of history than with its role in human self-realization, that is, its possible contribution to full human development. This parallel is quickly lost in the later evolution of the problem of history in German philosophy. Kant's successors transformed what for him was a moral question into an epistemological issue in the typical transcendental sense. The question then became the conditions of the possibility of any science of history whatsoever in a genuinely Kantian spirit. Beginning with Simmel and Windelband, a series of neo-Kantian thinkers applied Kant's critical analysis of the possibility of knowledge, especially in the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, in the effort to differentiate the science of history from the natural sciences.

Windelband was slightly older than Simmel and would normally precede Simmel in a chronological account. But for descriptive purposes, it is appropriate to summarize the neo-Kantian discussion of the problem of history beginning with Simmel, and not with Windelband, whose view determined later developments. Simmel's book *The Problems of the Philosophy of History* (*Die*

Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie) first appeared in 1892 and then reappeared in a largely different form in 1905.²⁶ Hence, the two editions of this work span nearly the entire neo-Kantian discussion of history. His book is interesting for two reasons. First, it provides an account within the neo-Kantian tradition of the problem of history as part of the ongoing effort to differentiate history and the natural sciences and, hence, to give a specific status to history as a science. This problem, which has its inception in the semipopular Kantian writings on history, reaches a peak in Windelband's famous rectoral address, (1894), published shortly after the first edition of Simmel's book (1892). The main themes of Windelband's talk were later elaborated by Rickert as the central thrust of his own position in *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung: Eine logische Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaften* and other works.

Second, it provides a specific discussion of historical materialism. In an obvious anticipation of Lukács later view, also suggested by Max Weber, Simmel here makes a clear, forceful connection between neo-Kantianism and historical materialism.²⁷ According to Simmel, the two positions share a common purpose since historical materialism is actually a form of epistemological idealism; like epistemological idealism (the view Simmel defends in this book) the aim of historical materialism is to refute epistemological idealism; and epistemological idealism is merely a form of epistemological realism.²⁸ According to Simmel, historical materialism is nothing more nor less than the claim that the science of history is not determined by subjective or intellectual categories, and that its goal is the reproduction of what, in fact, really occurred in history.

Simmel's book is mainly concerned to expose the inadequacies of so-called historical realism as an approach to the problem of history. History in general is constituted by subjectivity, more precisely through the series of categories that give form to the con-

tent. In his examination of historical materialism, Simmel rejects the idea of historical realism as illusory. But he expresses limited sympathy for the heuristic device of an economic interpretation of history, that is, an appeal to an *a priori*, subjective category, on the explicit condition that history itself in all its manifestations is not reduced to economic phenomena.

It is difficult to discuss Simmel's argument for two reasons. First, his exposition of his view, although interesting, is characteristically complex and not easy to summarize. The second reason is related to the lengthy period separating the two editions of his work. In the second edition, which only appeared toward the close of the neo-Kantian discussion of the problem of history, Simmel was concerned in part to react against a discussion that the initial version of his study preceded, but did not greatly influence. It is not possible here to study the differences between the two editions of Simmel's book. Suffice it to say that at least in its later formulation, Simmel's analysis is interesting for his effort to refute the historical realism that he associates with Max Weber and to show that history is possible as a form produced in a *a priori* fashion by the inquiring mind.

There is a clear parallel between Kant's theory of knowledge and Simmel's effort to understand the conditions of the possibility of history. According to Simmel, historical—in his view, empirical—realism employs a correspondence theory of truth; but knowledge of what really happened is impossible. Since historical knowledge requires a translation of immediate data through categories,²⁹ it cannot be a mirror image of reality.³⁰ For this reason, historical materialism is unacceptable, and it is not materialism at all.³¹ Despite the failure of historical materialism to grasp that material interests only motivate history as mental values, it resembles his own epistemological idealism.³²

To the best of my knowledge there is no, or almost no, influence of Simmel's view on the genesis of Windelband's theory of history.

The *locus classicus* for Windelband's view of history is his rectoral address, "History and Natural Science," delivered in Strasbourg in 1894.³³ Here he addresses the ancient problem of the classification of types of science, which goes back in the tradition at least to Plato. This remains an important theme in the critical philosophy.³⁴ At the time Windelband wrote, this theme was still in the air, for instance in Wilhelm Dilthey's discussion, influenced by J. G. Droysen and others, of the distinction between historical sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) and natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*).

Dilthey's differentiation between natural and historical sciences in terms of the difference between *Verstehen* and *Erklären*, later elaborated by Hans-George Gadamer as the basis of his hermeneutic phenomenology, is well known. Windelband employed a different line of argument to distinguish, not between types of understanding, but among different approaches to the same object. In this way, he carried further Kant's effort, which connects the three *Critiques*, to relate types of knowledge to types of epistemological object.

Windelband's innovation lies in his approach to history from an epistemological perspective, more precisely in his formulation of the Kantian question of the conditions of the possibility of knowledge of history. A similar, closely Kantian attitude toward the epistemological problem of history links the writings of such neo-Kantians as Windelband, Rickert, Lask, and Simmel. This theme was not confined to neo-Kantians only. It interested other thinkers, such as Husserl, whose basic Kantian tendency on occasion led him to attack the neo-Kantian effort to sketch out a domain of historical knowledge. An instance is his sharp criticism of Dilthey in the programmatic discussion of "Philosophy as Rigorous Science."³⁵

Windelband's pioneer discussion of the conditions of historical knowledge had a decisive effect on later neo-Kantian debate. In his lecture, in part following Dilthey, he differentiates between the

natural and the historical sciences with respect to knowledge of the real (*Wirklichen*).³⁶ This purely methodological division rests on the formal character of the respective goals for knowledge. The former group of sciences seek general laws, whereas the latter are concerned with particular historical happenings. Windelband formulates this difference as the concern either with general, apodictic judgments, or with singular, assertoric propositions,³⁷ in his terminology the distinction between nomothetic and idiographic sciences. Historically, logic has mainly been interested in nomothetic science. But it would be extremely interesting to study the logical form of historical science.³⁸

Windelband's attention to logical form allows him to make a further series of distinctions between the two sciences. He maintains that one seeks laws and the other seeks forms (*Gestalten*). One tends toward abstraction and the other tends toward graphic concreteness (*Anschaulichkeit*). In sum, these two forms of science offer different, incompatible approaches with respect to time, essence, and individual manifestations. For the content of a historical occurrence cannot be understood from its own form alone, and the law and the event remain as the last incommensurable quantities of our world.³⁹

The result is a kind of historical skepticism. If laws and events are incommensurable, then they cannot be known since they escape the possibility of cognition. Here we note the emergence of a dark, skeptical side in the neo-Kantian examination of the possibility of a science of history. It was already present in the critical philosophy in Kant's skepticism about the cognitive possibilities of rationalism and empiricism, and it reemerges in the neo-Kantian discussion of history. It is this same neo-Kantian dark, skeptical side that Lukács later applies to classical German philosophy as such.

The three most important contributions to the discussion opened by Windelband's lecture are due to Lask, Rickert, and

Max Weber. In his dissertation, Lask, who was Rickert's doctoral student, developed the idea of historical irrationality (barely mentioned by Windelband) into a full-fledged doctrine. In a rare example of a teacher influenced by his student, Rickert took issue with Lask's view of the problem of historical irrationality in a book published nearly simultaneously with Lask's dissertation. In his sociological and economic research, Max Weber was influenced by Rickert's contribution to the debate on historical knowledge. Although he was primarily a sociologist, the philosophical importance of his thought and his role in the neo-Kantian discussion of history suggests its inclusion here.⁴⁰

In Windelband's famous talk, the problem of irrationality occurs in a remark on the incommensurability of the isolated event. "The content of a historical world occurrence [*Weltgeschens*] cannot be comprehended from its form. In this way, all attempts have failed to deduce by means of concepts the particular from the universal, the 'many' from the 'one,' the 'limited' from the 'unlimited' the 'concrete being' [*Dasein*] from the 'essence.'"⁴¹ If laws and historical occurrences are incommensurable quantities, a question arises about the possibility of historical knowledge.⁴²

Windelband returns to this question several years later, toward the close of the second volume of his well-known study *A History of Philosophy* (1900).⁴³ He suggests that irrationalism arises when the idealist attempt to deduce all phenomena from a fundamental principle is replaced by a view of the unreason of the world ground.⁴⁴ He associates the rise of the doctrine of irrationality with two thinkers, Schelling and Schopenhauer, particularly with the former's introduction of religious currents into absolute idealism. Schelling invoked the idea of an uncognizable leap (*Sprung*) in order to explain the transition from the absolute to concrete reality. His transfer of this inexplicable fact to the Absolute itself led him in the direction of Jacob Böhme and Franz von Baader.⁴⁵ In his treatise on freedom, Schelling spoke variously of an

Urgrund, *Ungrund*, or *Abgrund*, roughly an uncognizable, ultimately primitive ground in the divine nature, depicted as a dark striving and an infinite impulse. Windelband suggests that Schelling's view of nature as the theater for a conflict between purpose and irrational impulse led to his later, positive philosophy in which God's revelation in the world is not deduced, but experienced.⁴⁶ Schopenhauer developed the concept of irrationalism by removing the religious element and arguing that the dark urgency, or instinct directed only toward itself, appears as the will to live, as the essence of all things, as a version of the Kantian conception of the thing-in-itself.⁴⁷ For Schopenhauer, history teaches only individual facts, and there is no rational science of history.⁴⁸

Windelband follows others in suggesting that individual events are inherently irrational. As a result, the possibility of history as a science in the Kantian sense becomes problematic. Among the neo-Kantians, the greatest contribution to this problem is found in the thought of Emil Lask, Rickert's brilliant student. Lask, whom Rickert regarded as a thinker second to none in his generation,⁴⁹ is today almost unknown.⁵⁰ But in his short career, he influenced writers as diverse as the Marxist Lukács, the phenomenologist Heidegger, the sociologist Max Weber, and the historian of philosophy Richard Kroner.⁵¹

Lukács's relation to Lask is controversial. The personal attachment between the two thinkers is known. Lask, like Lukács, was a member of the circle loosely grouped around Max Weber. He interceded for Lukács in the latter's unsuccessful effort to obtain a *Habilitation*, or second doctoral thesis permitting one to become a permanent member of the university faculty, in Heidelberg. In an article on Lask published after his untimely death in 1915, Lukács clearly stated the importance of his friend's thought which implies its impact on his own position. According to Lukács, the most significant task at present was to come to grips with Lask's theory.⁵² In his great Marxist work on aesthetics, he indicates with appre-

ciation the well-intentioned criticism of Bloch, Lask, and especially Max Weber, and then notes that in his rejection of idealism in this work he is also rejecting his own youthful tendency.⁵³ This suggests the impact of Lask on his position. Yet in the interviews that form the basis of his oral autobiography, in response to a question he admits a warm friendship with Lask, but denies Lask's influence on his thought.⁵⁴

Perhaps because of his rejection of all forms of so-called bourgeois thought as such, Lukács later rejected the possibility of Lask's influence.⁵⁵ But Lask's neo-Kantian view of irrationality forms the basis of Lukács's Marxist effort to refute non-Marxist philosophy.⁵⁶ Irrationality has a two fold function in Lask's neo-Kantian position. First, it points to an epistemological limit through the identification of an uncognizable residue, an ontological surd that resists all efforts at knowledge. Second, it can be construed as a defense of subjectivity, of the irreducible value of the individual, which is finally unknowable.⁵⁷ Both points closely follow Kant's own concerns to identify the limits of knowledge and to stress the intrinsic worth of human being as an end in itself. In his Marxist appropriation of Lask's thought, Lukács follows the epistemological emphasis but inverts the neo-Kantian comprehension of human being through a new Copernican Revolution. For the hyperrationalist Lukács, already closer to Fichte and Hegel than to Kant, the neo-Kantian limitation of knowledge through the conception of irrationality points to the inherent inability of classical German philosophy to respond to real social problems.

Clearly, the concept of irrationality, if not the terminology, long precedes Lask's thought. Since its beginnings in ancient Greece, philosophy has always been concerned with reason, or the rationally knowable. The idea of reason points beyond itself to the irrational, to that which cannot be rationally cognized and is hence unknowable. The Greek fear of the essentially irrational is well known. The concern with irrationality is widespread in later

thought, including the contemporary discussion. For instance, Rescher has noted the problem of irrationality in the context of remarks on the relation of mathematics to nature.⁵⁹ Jon Elster considers indeterminacy as a source of instability in respect to rational choice theory.⁶⁰ Heidegger considers irrationality in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*.⁶¹ From a quasi-Heideggerean perspective, Christoph Jamme studies Husserl's supposed inability to grasp the limits of rationality.⁶² Paul Hühnerfeld objects to the link between political and philosophical irrationality in Heidegger's position.⁶³ And Alfred Baeumler analyzes irrationality in eighteenth-century logic and aesthetics.⁶⁴

Lukács was familiar with Lask's conception of irrationality. In an uncompleted work on aesthetics during his pre-Marxist Heidelberg period, he refers to Lask's view of "functional irrationality" of the given.⁶⁵ And in the Stalinist phase of his Marxist period, he notes that the term "irrationalism," which apparently first occurs in Kuno Fischer's work on Fichte, is even more important for Lask.⁶⁶

His idea of irrationality is already present in his precocious dissertation.⁶⁷ Lask's understanding of irrationality arises from reflection on the philosophical tradition.⁶⁸ In his dissertation, Lask provides a view of the history of philosophy that dominates all his later work. Unlike the historian Windelband, he is aware that irrationality is a basic concern in the entire philosophical tradition. Lask studies the theme of irrationality as part of an effort to broaden the problem of epistemology beyond the explicit limits fixed by Kant in a manner arguably consistent with the spirit of the critical philosophy. He believes that Kant's examination of the conditions of knowledge presupposes the unknowability of sensory content devoid of form, of what has not been brought under the categories, which is hence irrational. For Lask, "irrational" does not mean "arational," or "nonrational"; rather, following Windelband, for Lask this term designates the not-rationalizable

(*Nicht-Rationalisierbarkeit*).⁶⁸ It follows that this is not a quasi-Hegelian claim that particulars are irrational and universals are rational. On the contrary, it is an assertion of the intrinsic irrationality of the merely sensorily apparent (*Sinnlich-Anschauliches*).⁶⁹ In sum, what is merely sensorily apparent is only partially cognizable since, in principle, it cannot be fully known.

Lask's notion of irrationality exploits Kant's problematic distinction between two forms of phenomenal experience: judgments of perception, an initial level that, as merely sensory, is not yet knowledge; and judgments of experience, a further level that combines sensory and formal components required by knowledge.⁷⁰ Kant's discussion is carried further by Hegel in his analysis of the difference between sense certainty and perception.⁷¹ What for Lask is the intrinsic irrationality of the merely sensorily apparent is the uncognizable residue that supposedly remains when judgments of perception are brought under the categories and transformed into judgments of experience. Lask's ontological point is that there is always a sensory element lacking in form that, for this reason, cannot be known.

If this reading of Lask's concept of irrationality is correct, then there are two obvious objections. First, Lask is clearly committed to knowledge of the uncognizable, to knowing that which on his own reading of Kant cannot be known since it has not and cannot be given categorial form. Since direct intuition, the only other epistemological approach, is explicitly rejected by Kant, in this sense Lask's understanding of irrationality conflicts with the critical philosophy. Second, there is a difficulty following from his reliance on Kant's own distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience. Irrationality is meaningful only through the reference to a sensory residue said to remain after the contents of the sensory manifold have been brought under the categories. But Kant's distinction conflicts with the spirit of the critical philosophy that does not differentiate levels of phenomenality

with respect to types of knowledge. Mere receptivity is a logical condition for knowledge of objects as given in experience; it is not a level of conscious experience that precedes such knowledge.

In his dissertation, Lask's dualistic approach to the history of philosophy presupposes his understanding of ontological irrationality. Hegel elaborated his approach to prior philosophy in the first place through a reading of the difference between the views of Fichte and Schelling, before extending this reading to the entire philosophical tradition.⁷² Similarly, Lask's approach develops in reverse chronological order in two stages, separated by the critical philosophy. These stages include an earlier, detailed analysis of German idealism from Kant to Hegel with special attention to Fichte, followed by a later, more general account of the wider philosophical tradition from Plato to Kant.

Lask introduces further forms of dualism on the epistemological and methodological planes in his interpretation of German idealism. His epistemological dualism is dependent on Hegel and Lotze. He agrees with Hegel's epistemological interpretation of post-Kantian German idealism as an ongoing effort to perfect the Kantian approach to knowledge. But he rejects the Hegelian description of the problem. He follows Lotze's appeal to the concept of value as a third term beyond the sensory and the nonsensory levels in his discussion of the question of concrete value (*konkreten Wertes*). The decisive element in his interpretation of German idealism lies in a further, methodological dualism concerning two basic forms of logic. For analytical logic, the empirical plane is the sole and full reality, from which the concept can be abstracted as a product of thought.⁷³ The alternative, or emanational, form of logic presupposes the logical priority of the concept, from which the empirical dimension follows.

Lask applies his methodological distinction between forms of logic to the analysis of German idealism in an important discus-

sion of Fichte's place between Kant and Hegel.⁷⁴ Fichte mediates between Kant's position, which is based on an analytical logic, and Hegel's, which presupposes an emanational logic. Lask further distinguishes various stages in the development of Fichte's position. These include: its initial statement in Fichte's *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (*Foundations of the Science of Knowledge*) where he supposedly adopts an emanational form of logic later elaborated by Hegel; the separation, beginning with the "Second Introduction to the Science of Knowledge" (1797), between the form and content of subjectivity, which supposedly requires an analytical logic closer to Kant and immune to Hegel's earlier criticism; and the later emergence of a theory of history allegedly based on a quasi-Kantian epistemology.

Lask's application of his distinction between analytical and emanational forms of logic to the history of German idealism is significant as an effort to demonstrate Kant's objection to Fichte. In a well-known comment rejecting Fichte's quasi-Kantian claim to understand the critical philosophy better than its author,⁷⁵ he remarks that Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* is intended to deduce objects from concepts.⁷⁶ In effect, in his interpretation of post-Kantian idealism, Lask generalizes Kant's remark about Fichte to apply to Hegel as well.

The hermeneutical progression in the neo-Kantian discussion of irrationality from Lask to Rickert is mediated by readings of Fichte and Hegel. Lask's comprehension of German idealism and the problem of irrationality depends on his reading of Fichte's view. He follows the later Fichte in arguing for an irrational separation between concept and reality, subjectivity and objectivity.⁷⁷ Hegel's unavailing appeal to an emanational form of logic is intended to overcome the problem of dualism, and the irrationality to which it gives rise, through a new logical approach.⁷⁸ In the same way, it has been suggested that Rickert's main purpose in his

book *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung* (1902), is to overcome the problem posed by what Lask, following Fichte, called the *hiatus irrationalis*.⁷⁹

As in *Science and History: A Critique of Positivist Epistemology*, so in this book Rickert is concerned with the problem of the classification of the sciences along the lines already sketched by Windelband in his lecture. Following upon the contributions to the problem of historical knowledge by Windelband and Lask, Rickert's purpose is to show, from a quasi-Kantian perspective, how the conditions of the possibility of knowledge of the historical individual can be satisfied.

In his introduction, Rickert announces his intention to clarify the problem of concept formation from a purely logical standpoint in order to specify the limits of natural science as well as the type of science that can fill the resultant gap.⁸⁰ His aim is the specification of the nature of the historical concept.⁸¹ Natural science can tell us nothing of the particular event, although it is the role of history to do so.⁸² He follows his neo-Kantian colleagues in further conceding that reality itself is irrational, since it resists every conception.⁸³

Rickert appeals to a concept of value in order to demonstrate the possibility of historical knowledge. His thesis is that the formation of concepts with an individual content, or individualizing concept formation, takes place only through a theoretical relationship of historical objects to values, which is hence teleological.⁸⁴ The fundamental logical principles of concept formation in history are united in the concept of historical development, which consists of unique and individual processes that fall under historical concepts by means of values.⁸⁵ The teleological unity of the historical individual can be understood as a value relation.⁸⁶ History as a science is possible, but the historical and natural scientific perspectives differ in kind.⁸⁷ Moreover, the idea of a so-called value-free, naturalistic philosophy of history must be rejected,⁸⁸ for the failure

to grasp the concept that value is the presupposition of the science of history leads the scholar astray in search of a false idea of objectivity."⁹

Rickert's positive thrust contrasts usefully with the mainly negative tone of the debate. In the context of the neo-Kantian examination of the conditions of historical knowledge, in particular after the skeptical contributions of Windelband and Lask, Rickert's axiological discussion is important in pointing to a scientific understanding of history. His analysis is specifically important for Lukács in that he demonstrates how to argue that Marxism provides knowledge of social reality. In Lukács's initial Marxist theory, Lask and Rickert play complementary roles. Lask offers the prototype of the Marxist rejection of classical German philosophy, and Rickert provides the model for suggested Marxist solution.

Rickert's approach was widely influential, especially on philosophically minded writers outside the narrow confines of philosophy, such as the sociologist Max Weber. His value-laden approach to the theme of historical knowledge of the irrational given is the basis of Weber's important analysis of the logical problem of political economy.⁹⁰ Weber was mainly concerned with the work of the founders of the historical school of political economy, including Wilhelm Roscher, Karl Knies, and Bruno Hildebrand. He relates Roscher's distinctions between philosophical and historical treatments of reality to distinctions between so-called *Gesetzes-* and *Wirklichkeitswissenschaften* (lawlike sciences and sciences concerned with reality) introduced by Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert, and others.⁹¹ He then proposes a third possibility meant to mediate between the alternatives of particularity and universality. In his new view, the particular is not only an exemplar but also part of the whole, which the concept represents.⁹²

With respect to irrationality, for Max Weber, as for the other neo-Kantians, the main point of reference was the critical philosophy. He understands irrationality as that which cannot be calcu-

lated (*Unberechenbarkeit*), such as the specific irrationality of human activity, which he related to Kant's view of the noumenal realm.³³ Human activity is not irrational as such, but can be understood according to such categories as means and ends.³⁴ Even if he refuses to use the same form of causality in every discipline, he recommends the employment of a form of causality in historical interpretation.³⁵ But he is careful to reject a strict Kantianism, since this would make the comprehension of behavior impossible.³⁶ Finally, we can note that in his criticism of Knies's emanational form of explanation, Weber by implication further refuses the Hegelian view from which it derives. His influence on Lukács's initial Marxist synthesis is visible in different ways, including the conception of the modern state as a system in order to rationalize its needs, or content, and its form.³⁷

Obviously, a theory can only be evaluated if it is understood; and it can only be understood through comprehension of the distinctions it employs, the frame of reference it presupposes. Lukács's Marxism rests on Marx and Marxism as well as on a detailed grasp and appropriation of German neo-Kantian thought. The aim of this chapter was not to provide a summary of the complex neo-Kantian discussion of a science of history, even in outline. It was meant to bring out the relevant background in German neo-Kantianism for Lukács's effort to demonstrate that non-Marxist thought is in principle incapable of knowledge of the social context.

Lukács's dualistic analysis rests on his ability to differentiate between two approaches to the problem of knowledge: a non-Marxist, so-called idealist, or bourgeois, philosophical approach, exemplified by classical German Philosophy, in principle unable to know its object; and a materialist, or Marxist, approach in principle capable of knowledge where non-Marxist thought fails. The difference between Lask's and Rickert's views of the nature of the cognizability of the historical object determines Lukács's analysis

of non-Marxism and Marxism. Both Lask and Rickert follow Windelband in relating the problem of historical knowledge to the theme of irrationality; but they differ in their views of the historical object. Lask maintains there is a *hiatus irrationalis* that prevents the concept from grasping its object; Rickert argues for a grasp of the individual event as part of a totality that develops through time. Lask and Rickert disagree on whether the historical object is irrational or rational with respect to thought.

In sum, Lukács's attempt to argue the claim for Marxism over classical German philosophy, which earlier Marxists merely asserted, rests on his creative exploitation of the different neo-Kantian views of the cognizability of the historical object represented by Lask and Rickert, on his generalization of Lask's point about the inability to know the historical object to classical German philosophy in general, and on his application of Rickert's idea of historical knowledge to Marxism. His knowledge of German neo-Kantianism from Lukács's pre-Marxist period is the basis for the claim, central to his Marxist period, that non-Marxist philosophy is intrinsically incapable of knowledge of reality, which is precisely cognizable from a Marxist perspective.

Marxian Economics and Neo-Kantian Philosophy

THE PRIOR DISCUSSION HAS SKETCHED the background in Marx, Marxism, and German neo-Kantianism of Lukács's effort to refute non-Marxist philosophy and to argue for Marxism. This argument depends on a conception of reason. Marxism maintains that non-Marxism is incapable of knowing its object, the social context, which is known by Marxism. The alleged epistemological deficiency of the non-Marxist view of reason is due to its defective notion of reason, which is remedied in the Marxist conception.

This analysis carried further Kant's examination of the conditions of knowledge on the basis of the relation of subjectivity to objectivity. Marx's critique of Hegel imputes an inversion of the link between concept and object to speculative idealism. In this sense, his objection is parallel to Kant's criticism of prior epistemological views. For Marx as for Kant, the methodological flaw of prior philosophy lies in a mistaken comprehension of subjectivity in terms of objectivity. Kant's idea that the subject produces its object as a condition of knowledge recurs *mutatis mutandis* in Marx's claim that the human being produces itself and its social context. In the distinction between the irrational and the rational,

neo-Marxism restates the Kantian idea of an epistemological limit in terms of the cognizability of the given. Lukács transforms the neo-Kantian concern to acknowledge the limits of knowledge into an argument against classical German philosophy in general. In neo-Kantianism, irrationality points to the limit to which the object can be known. In Lukács's initial Marxism, the same notion refers to the inability of a form of philosophy to provide knowledge. In a word, Lukács holds that classical German philosophy is intrinsically irrational, whereas Marxism is rational.

Lukács's argument for Marxism as the truth of classical German philosophy is the central theme of *History and Class Consciousness*, his brilliant initial contribution to Marxism, published in 1923. This book remains Lukács's best-known and certainly most widely read Marxist work. It is one of the most influential philosophical treatises of the century, and its influence is visible throughout the later Marxist discussion.¹ Its publication immediately led to a violent controversy in which Lukács was attacked as a left-wing deviationist.² Although officially unavailable for many years, it became an underground classic, available in so-called "Raubdruck," as an unofficial reprint. The lengthy series of reservations Lukács formulated in the preface to the new edition (1967), more than four decades after its original publication, in no way diminishes the interest of this seminal study.³

This important work consists of a preface and eight essays. A brief list of Lukács's insights in his book will suffice to call attention to a number of themes that we cannot discuss in detail. In his work Lukács proposed a theory of Marxism as a method valid in independence of any particular historical claim. He further called attention in a profound manner to the Hegelian background in Marx's position, a point that was made independently in the same year by Korsch.⁴ He discovered the concept of alienation, at a time when Marx's "Paris Manuscripts" (1844) had not been published, that he analyzed under the heading of "reification." He showed

the importance of the Hegelian category of totality, more precisely the idea of concrete totality, which Hegel refers to under the perhaps misleading heading of absolute knowledge (*absolutes Wissen*) for Marx's thought. And he elaborated a theory of class consciousness that, once stated, can be seen as central to Marx's position as a fundamental premise.⁵

In the preface, Lukács describes his collection of occasional essays as forming "a definite unity"⁶ consisting in the effort to discover, to apply correctly, and to defend "the essence of Marx's method."⁷ He is content to accept and to interpret Marx's theory⁸ on the grounds that "in Marx's theory and method the *true method* by which to understand society and history has *finally* been discovered."⁹ The aim of "Marxist method" is "*knowledge of the present.*"¹⁰ "The war, the crisis and the Revolution, not excluding the so-called slower tempo in the development of the Revolution and the new economic policy of Soviet Russia have not thrown up a single problem that cannot be solved by the dialectical method—and by that method *alone*. The concrete answers to particular practical problems lie outside the framework of these essays. The task they propose is to make us aware of Marxist method, to throw light on it as an unendingly fertile source of solutions to otherwise intractable dilemmas."¹¹

This description calls for a series of comments. First, there are numerous varieties of Marxism. Despite his concern with Marxist orthodoxy and his acknowledgment of Lenin's methodological contribution, Lukács here accords greater weight to Rosa Luxemburg's development of Marx's economic doctrines. He specifically states that truly revolutionary Marxism requires a confrontation with her thought.¹² But he rapidly changed his mind in order to insist on Lenin's Marxist preeminence.¹³ Second, there is the familiar Marxist conflation of Marx and Marxism, present here in the seamless transition between Marx's method and Marxist method. This conflation is contradicted by his correct observation

that Marxism, which follows from Engels's view, is merely an interpretation of Marx's thought.¹⁴ His grasp of Marxism as a series of readings of Marx makes possible his defense of Marxist orthodoxy, even against Engels.¹⁵ His critique of Engels, later partially retracted, is one of the highlights of this book.¹⁶ Third, he insists that experience during "the years of revolution" has provided a "magnificent confirmation of all the essential aspects of orthodox [i. e. Communist] Marxism."¹⁷ But the nature of that confirmation remains vague. It is, then, not without importance that in the second edition of the book he criticizes his earlier, overly sanguine revolutionary perspective as well as his substitution of romantic enthusiasm for practical knowledge.¹⁸ Fourth, he regards Marx's theory as a dialectical method of unlimited epistemological potential. His announced intention is to stimulate further discussion of the Marxian method.

Orthodox Marxism is mainly, almost entirely, based on Engels's interpretation of Marx. It is, then, ironic to insist that orthodox Marxism has been confirmed by practice in view of this reservations about Engels's view. Like Engels, Lukács develops his reading of Marx's thought through a discussion of its link to Hegel's. Although he follows the Marxist approach to Marx's theory as the reverse of speculative idealism, he disagrees at two crucial points. First, he stresses, against Marxism in general, the error of treating Hegel's philosophy as a "dead dog."¹⁹ The effort to take Hegel seriously is a main theme throughout his Marxist period.²⁰ Second, he regards the well-known passage in the second afterword to Marx's *Capital*, where Marx speaks of the need to provide an inversion of Hegelian idealism, on which many Marxists rely in ignorance of Hegel's position, as insufficient for a grasp of Marx's relation to Hegel. This relation can only be correctly understood if it is noticed that Marx's position rests on a whole series of categories from Hegel's *Logic*.²¹ In this way, he accepts Lenin's later claim that no one can understand *Capital* who has

filed to master Hegel's *Logic*.²² But, unlike Lenin, whose comprehension of Hegel remained rudimentary, Lukács is the first Marxist to possess a knowledge of speculative idealism sufficient to develop this approach to Marx's thought.

For Lukács, as for Marxists in general, Marx can only be understood in terms of Hegel. But his reading of Marx through Hegel's thought is suspect for two reasons. First, it is clearly pointless to use the term "dialectic" for Marx unless and until its meaning in Hegel's thought can be specified. His observation that it is even more difficult to specify the precise meanings of the dialectical concepts in Marx's thought than in Hegel's²³ is an indication of why the continued employment of such terminology serves rather to conceal than to reveal its essence. Second, he insists on Marx's dialectical method; but, despite the continuing effort to formalize Hegel's dialectic,²⁴ the consequence of his critique of Kant's critical philosophy is the rejection of the idea of method as such.²⁵ If there is no Hegelian method, then it is obviously not possible to understand Marx's so-called dialectical method as the reverse of Hegel's. There is, then, no more reason to grant his unsupported claim for the unlimited epistemological significance of Marx's method as for other versions of this standard Marxist dogma.

Lukács only develops his argument for Marxism as the truth of classical German philosophy in a single place, in "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," the lengthy, complex, and justly celebrated central essay of *History and Class Consciousness* around which the entire discussion turns. This essay is extraordinarily rich, but also difficult, perhaps as difficult as anything written in this century. Even today, after numerous works discussing the young Lukács, a full or even an adequate discussion of this seminal essay seems not to have appeared.²⁶

It is not an accident that Lukács's argument in favor of Marx and against Marxism in his discussion of reification has rarely been considered in depth. The very degree of his grasp of prior

philosophy poses a considerable obstacle to a comprehension of this thought. It is no exaggeration to say that even in his first Marxist work his systematic analysis betrays an almost encyclopedic, quasi-Hegelian grasp of the historical background. The entire book represents a profound effort to combine the Marxist view of political economy and the neo-Kantian approach to the theory of history. The result is a complex, brilliant discussion, which relies on an intimate acquaintance with the whole range of modern philosophy, with particular attention to classical German philosophy and Marxism, as well as numerous references to such related fields as sociology, political theory, and so on. In this sense Lukács resembles the Marxist Hegel. As for Hegel, so for Lukács one cannot understand the systematic side of Lukács's argument without a thorough acquaintance with the history of philosophy, especially with the history of modern philosophy.

The discussion of reification is important for at least three reasons. First, Lukács here advances a number of ideas that he will continue to discuss throughout his later writings. Second, this essay offers the initial, unsurpassed, version of the argument for the superiority of Marxism over non-Marxism in terms of a distinction between forms of reason. Although in later writings Lukács continued to maintain and to reformulate this view in different ways, he later refined his argument in a manner that removed or at least blunted the stark manner in which the claim for the superiority of Marxism over the entire German philosophical tradition is formulated for the first time in this famous essay. Indeed, there is a dramatic quality in this essay that is lacking, or at least attenuated, in Lukács's later writings. Finally, in this text Lukács offers a brilliant, highly informed Marxist analysis of the history of philosophy in order to support the Marxist claim for the superiority of materialism over idealism. This claim is often made, but rarely argued, and even less often argued in historical detail. The Marxist literature is enormous and growing rapidly, but Lukács's

Marxist analysis of non-Marxism has certainly never been surpassed and almost certainly remains and will long remain unequalled in the discussion.

Lukács's demonstration of the irrationality of non-Marxism and the rationality of Marxism is a further development of the Kantian approach to knowledge in terms of the relation of subjectivity to objectivity. It is initially formulated in his important discussion of "Reification and Class Consciousness," the central essay in his *History and Class Consciousness*. This and the two succeeding chapters will consider his discussion in detail. In its initial statement, Lukács's argument includes three elements: an analysis of Marxist economics as indispensable for knowledge at this stage in the development of human society, a critique of non-Marxist philosophy as incapable of knowledge, and a reading of Marxism as providing the solution for the problems of non-Marxist philosophy.

This chapter will examine Lukács's argument for the fundamental role of Marxian economic theory at the present stage of social development. His neo-Kantian argument against non-Marxist thought, especially classical German philosophy, will be studied in the following chapter. Still another chapter will discuss his further claim, the corollary of his demonstration of the epistemological irrationality of non-Marxist thought, that only in Marxism do we find the solution of the problems of classical German philosophy.

The first two sentences of the essay contain a statement of Marxist faith: "It is no accident that Marx should have begun with an analysis of commodities when, in the two great works of his mature period, he set out to portray capitalist society in its totality and to lay bare its fundamental nature. For at this stage in the history of mankind there is no problem that does not ultimately lead back to that question and there is no solution that could not be found in the solution to the riddle of commodity-structure."²⁷

Lukács's forceful, even dramatic statement is enormously significant. It commits him to a line of analysis that determines the remainder of his essay and his entire Marxist period, including an interpretation of Marx and of the relation of Marxism and classical German philosophy. Following Marxist practice, he does not differentiate Marx and Marxism as such either here or elsewhere in his Marxist writings. But his writings from this period, including this essay, contain critical remarks on Marxism, above all in his final phase. Significantly, here, at the beginning of his essay, he refers to Marx's thought alone.²⁸ Further following the Marxist view of Marx as the discoverer of the economic dimension of social reality, he sees the Marxian theory as based on insight into the economic dimension of modern society. Here he associates the problem of knowledge of society, the point of view of totality, the comprehension of the fundamental level of social structure, and an economic vantage point.

This reading of Marx yields three inferences. First, Marx's understanding of political economy in principle separates his theory from others in the German tradition. Lukács later relativized this distinction in his acknowledgment of Hegel's awareness of the economic dimension of his society.²⁹ But he argued for the superiority of Marx's economic insight on the grounds that Hegel failed to surpass the limits of English political economy. Second, as a result of his stress on economics, Lukács emphasizes Marx's later thought. This emphasis was initially unavoidable since, at the time that Lukács wrote, certain of Marx's early writings, including the crucially important "Paris Manuscripts," had not yet been published. In later writings Lukács reduces his attention to the economic aspect of Marx's theory in favor of its more directly philosophic dimension. Third, he signals his general acceptance of the Marxist claim that Marxism provides a scientific solution to the questions of classical German philosophy. In this essay Lukács does not directly address the vexing question of the relation of

philosophy and science. But it is sufficient to note that Marx's theory depends on insight into the structure of commodity-analysis to point to an opposition between science, that is, political economy, and philosophy.

Lukács's statement is most startling, but also most typical, as a declaration of epistemological confidence in a new approach. His indication of his acceptance of Marxism, not only as a revolutionary theory, but as a revolutionary type of knowledge, is highly typical in the modern tradition. Modern philosophy is composed of radical, disparate thinkers, such as Descartes and Kant, Husserl, the early Wittgenstein, and the Vienna Circle, who are united in the belief that they have brought philosophy to an end. Lukács resembles many others in the modern philosophical tradition in his belief in the limitless resources of a new approach to knowledge. Paradoxically, his revolutionary claim for the epistemological force of Marx's grasp of the fundamental economic structure of advanced industrial society as the conceptual *vade mecum* to resolve any and all contemporary problems is, then, by no means unprecedented. It is hard to imagine a more direct, more dramatic, more forceful, and at the same time more traditional claim than Lukács makes here at the earliest possible point in his essay.

As an epistemological assertion Lukács's comprehension of Marx's theory differs in two ways from other such radical declarations. First, like other Marxists, he insists on the peculiarly important role of political economy. But Lukács differs here from other Marxists in his concern to demonstrate this frequent assertion through detailed discussion of classical German philosophy. Second, he exhibits an uncommon, perhaps unprecedented, certainly imprudent degree of faith in the utility of Marx's insight into economic reality to resolve questions of knowledge. Unlike other Marxists, Lukács does not merely claim that Marxism is the solution to the problems of modern society, or even that it resolves the questions of philosophy. He makes the wider, simply staggering,

obviously indefensible suggestion that the Marxist view of commodity-analysis can yield the solution to *any problem whatsoever*. It is sufficient to state this claim to see at once that it is simply untenable.

Lukács's belief in the unlimited utility of Marx's theory of commodity analysis is the basis of his initial Marxist theory. The essay as a whole divides naturally into three main parts connected by the distinction in kind between rationality and irrationality, Marxism and non-Marxism. In the first part, "The Phenomenon of Reification," Lukács describes the Marxist view of commodity-analysis. In the second part, entitled "The Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought," he argues in detail for the supposedly intrinsic inability of classical German thought to resolve its central concern. The third part, "The Standpoint of the Proletariat," contains a demonstration that the concerns motivating non-Marxism are resolved by Marxism.

The evolution of the contemporary world, in particular the collapse of official Marxism in eastern Europe tends to bolster the insistence by Adam Smith, Locke, Marx, Hegel, and many others on the importance of political economy for an understanding of social life. Marxists above all routinely maintain the fundamental importance of the economic dimension of society.³⁰ In the first part of his discussion, Lukács's main aim is to demonstrate that Marxist political economy offers an indispensable key to knowledge of social reality that is impossible from any other perspective, such as classical German philosophy. Although aware of other, non-Marxist forms of political economy, he holds that in virtue of their intrinsic limitations they achieve only a partial understanding of society at best. Even if it is conducted from a philosophical angle of vision, this part of the discussion is properly pre-philosophical since it mainly concerns economics and not philosophy. However, this analysis is not philosophically irrelevant, but philosophically relevant as the basis of his later account of non-Marxist philosophy.

The claim that at the present stage of social development all problems can be resolved through Marx's analysis of commodities is philosophically significant. There is a clear suggestion that in the final analysis the problems of philosophy can be resolved on the nonphilosophical, that is, economic plane.³¹ In that sense, Lukács's Marxism at least superficially resembles some forms of positivism that tend to deny an intrinsic role to philosophy as such. The problems identified within philosophy must either be solved on an extraphilosophical plane or rejected as pseudoproblems.³² Similarly, Lukács believes that philosophy, at least classical German philosophy, is significant for pointing to real problems that it fails to resolve. This supposed failure is not merely contingent, but follows seamlessly from the intrinsic incapacity of non-Marxism to do more than identify issues in modern industrial society.

Lukács's innovations include his brilliant, flawed account of the phenomenon of alienation under the heading of reification. This account is unusually insightful since it uncovers Marx's conception of alienation, fundamental to his position, through a reading of his later writings. Lukács in effect refutes in advance the later effort to demonstrate a break in the development of Marx's position by showing the continued presence of the idea of alienation even in *Capital*.³³ The flaw in Lukács's account lies in his conflation of alienation and objectification, a mistake he later attributed to following Hegel uncritically.³⁴

He links his remarks on reification (*Verdinglichung*)—literally "thingification"—with which the discussion begins, to Marx's famous comments on the fetishism of commodities in *Capital*. A fetish is literally something artificial or false that acquires an almost supernatural power over people. In a celebrated passage, Marx writes: "A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of Men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour, because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing

not between themselves, but between the products of their labour."³⁵ What Marx is saying is that the relations between people take on, or assume, an objective form in the products of their work; and he is further saying that there is a kind of inversion at work in the process of the production of the commodity, since the things control us and not we the things. In a word, the things do not depend upon us, who produce them; rather, we depend on the things, which are the real subjects.

Lukács does not provide an economic analysis; nor does he critically examine Marx's view of commodity-analysis, which he simply and uncritically presupposes as the starting point of his own theory. He uncritically accepts the riddle of the fetishism of commodities as objectively the case and as specific to modern capitalism. He assumes that it is only in modern capitalism that everything is finally organized around the commodity that then becomes the universal category of society as a whole. And he further assumes that within advanced industrial society labor acquires an objectivity and independence with respect to the individual worker, to which he or she is subservient, and things and relations between them arise. Lukács's specific contribution lies in the effort to elucidate the epistemological consequences following from Marx's view of the commodity. "Our intention here is to *base* ourselves on Marx's economic analyses and to proceed from there to a discussion of the problems growing out of the fetish character of commodities, both as an objective form and also as a subjective stance corresponding to it. Only by understanding this can we obtain a clear insight into the ideological problems of capitalism and its downfall."³⁶

In writings from his Marxist period, his commitment and to Marx and Marxism is total. But under the guise of interpretation he does not hesitate to rethink the Marxian analysis with the help of other, often non-Marxist thinkers. Here he follows Marx's view of labor in the abstract, quantifiable sense as a historical product

that arises at a given time and place. He follows Max Weber and Frederick W. Taylor, among others, in his conception of rationalization, or quantifiability, as a basic feature of modern capitalism, in which quality is replaced by quantity. As he interprets Marx, reification is the result of the organization of social structure around the production and sale of commodities. The appeal to reification presupposes that society can satisfy its needs through commodity exchange in which artificial economic relations systematically displace natural, or more natural, human relations, for the fate of everyone is henceforth subjected to the development of the unified economic process. "The commodity can only be understood in its undistorted essence when it becomes the universal category of society as a whole. Only in this context does the reification produced by commodity relations assume decisive importance both for the objective evolution of society and for the stance adopted by men towards it."³⁷

He notes Marx's belief that the emergence of use-values in the form of rational objectification, that is, the production of socially useful and hence salable items, alters the character of things. For the appeal to rational objectification in capitalism tends to conceal the intrinsic character of objects, which accordingly take on a new and different appearance. Following Marx, he writes: "This rational objectification conceals above all the immediate-qualitative and material-character of things as things. When use-values appear universally as commodities they acquire a new objectivity, a new substantiality which they did not possess in an age of episodic exchange and which destroys their original and authentic substantiality."³⁸

He insists on the epistemological consequences of Marx's particular form of economic analysis. The universal extension of capitalism, and the resultant reification, are reflected in an epistemological deficit. The supposed failure of non-Marxist thinkers, such as Simmel, to penetrate behind the phenomenon to the es-

sence is significant. In part relying on the Hegelian distinction between appearance and essence, Lukács suggests that non-Marxist thought fails to surpass the superficial level in order to grasp reality as it is. This is a result of the failure to grasp the phenomena in their historical, in particular in their economic, matrix. But the conceptual defect is not merely a failure to understand political economy. If the economic dimension following from the commodity permeates contemporary society as a whole, then society is literally uncognizable, that is, unknowable, from the bourgeois perspective. At this point, even before we reach the specific analysis of classical German philosophy, we find a clear anticipation of the neo-Kantian critique Lukács later brings against non-Marxist thought in general for its inherent inability to grasp its object. To put the same point in other words, for methodological reasons due to its abstract approach to social reality, non-Marxist thought is irrational, or incapable of knowing its object.

This objection derives from a claimed correlation between consciousness and social reality. Philosophy is a form of contemplation that allegedly assumes specific form in modern industrial society. Max Weber's argument for a correlation between the success of a system based on private ownership of the means of production and certain forms of religion is well known.³⁹ In part following Weber, Lukács holds that the very character of the specifically capitalist form of contemplation is a secondary product of the turn to capitalism, within which this form of rational calculation has a specific role to play. Just as the worker has a specific function within capitalism, so the bureaucracy this form of society creates in turn leads to a form of thought adapted to it.⁴⁰

Marxists, following Marx, tend to grasp society in terms of economic organization. But Weber reversed the relation in order to analyze economic relations on the basis of the society in which they occurred. Lukács here applies Weber's view of the particular suitability of forms of life to forms of economic organization, the

basis of Weber's well-known discussion of the role of Protestantism in the formation of capitalism, in order to provide a concrete interpretation of the well-known, but exceedingly delicate Marxian thesis of the dependence of thought on social being.

Lukács follows Weber's conception of rationality in maintaining that the insistence on calculability in the workplace is widely followed throughout society, specifically in the emergence of a contemplative form of consciousness. Bureaucracy in general constitutes an adjustment of the way of life, and even consciousness, to the economic demands made by the capitalist system. An instance is an increasing concern with the rationalization of the means and neglect of issues concerning the ends that allegedly affect capitalism.⁴¹ His wider point is that the historical rise of the commodity affects not only objects but human consciousness as well. He endorses the Marxian claim that being determines thought as ideology. "The transformation of the commodity relation into a thing of 'ghostly objectivity' cannot therefore content itself with the reduction of all objects for the gratification of human needs to commodities. It stamps its imprint upon the whole consciousness of man."⁴²

The proposed correlation between an alleged incapacity of contemplative, or philosophical, thought and modern society underlies his attack on non-Marxist philosophy at this point. He insists that the non-Marxist perspective, particularly classical German philosophy, is finally incapable of knowledge in the deepest sense. His argument for this crucial point rests on the kind of knowledge needed to function within capitalism. The general orientation toward results in modern industrial society, where profit is a paramount concern, leads to a narrowing of the point of view on the world. The individual producer needs to be able to perform calculations from his or her own perspective. But the same person must presuppose that there is a larger totality that cannot be known and that is ruled by chance.

If this analysis is accurate, it points toward a correlation between types of knowledge and types of society. There is an important epistemological price tag attached to the very concern with profit characteristic of capitalism. Knowledge of the parts is in no way the same as knowledge of the whole. But for capitalism, such knowledge is in principle not possible since the whole or totality can neither be systematized nor cognized. In fact, emphasis on the specialized skills necessary for capitalism to function optimally requires us to turn away from the analysis of the totality, which, methodologically, lies beyond our grasp. "The specialization of skills leads to the destruction of every image of the whole."⁴³

According to Lukács, this is not a merely contingent feature since the continued existence of capitalism is incompatible with an awareness of its true form. "For the complete knowledge of the whole would vouchsafe the knower a monopoly that would amount to the virtual abolition of the capitalist economy."⁴⁴ The result is a necessarily superficial form of thought that fails to come to grips with essential elements. An example is the analysis of the key problem of the periodic economic crises that bourgeois economics regards as merely transitory and contingent. Lukács reminds us that Marx regarded such manifestations as linked to deeper problems; and he held that the failure to perceive them was due to a superficiality that failed to penetrate to the level of forms of value.

Lukács's objection to the cognitive status of so-called bourgeois or capitalist thought rests on the supposed incompatibility between what we can call epistemological holism and a kind of rationality prevalent in modern society. His argument can be reconstructed as follows: (1) There is a kind of thought typical of capitalism, or modern industrialized society; (2) capitalist thought does not penetrate beyond the appearance to the essence of modern society; (3) this inability is not contingent, but constitutive of capitalist thought; (4) it follows from the relation of thought to

the organization of the means of production; (5) within capitalism, rationality appears as rationalization, concerned only with the maximization of profits; (6) when rationality takes the form of rationalization, it is unable to grasp the whole; (7) a grasp of the whole is the condition of knowledge; (8) the inability to grasp the whole maintains the *status quo ante* and impedes, even prevents, social change.

His argument, which applies to modern industrialized society the Marxian view that thought is determined by social being, rests on four presuppositions: (1) the standard idealistic distinction between the way things are and the way they are given in experience, as well as the possibility under certain conditions of knowing things as they are through experience; (2) the existence of a specifically inadequate, capitalist mode of thought; (3) the explanation of the inadequacy of specifically capitalist thought as a function of capitalism itself; (4) the conception of truth as requiring a view of totality, or the whole, the standard holist epistemological claim, made by Hegel and all succeeding holists.

For purposes of this discussion, we can admit the first and fourth presuppositions. The first one is not controversial since every theory of illusion or delusion necessarily presupposes conditions under which the distortion is overcome; otherwise an illusion or delusion could not be identified. The fourth presupposition, the claim for holism, arises independently in the effort to maintain a conception of truth in independence of foundationalism.⁴⁵ This leaves two conditions of the argument that cannot be granted. It is unacceptable to hold that capitalist thought is inadequate because of capitalism. This claim is equivalent to understanding capitalism, or a specific type of organization of the means of production, as a cause in respect to which the specific form of thought is the effect. But although people act, capitalism in general does not act. Thought in capitalism is not distorted by it although there is no shortage of thought that tends to justify the

way things are on ideological grounds. It is not capitalism that distorts our knowledge about and perpetuates itself; it is rather individuals who accept and propagate a distorted social view for reasons of self-interest. There is no known acceptable version of this supposition and it fails in its present form.⁴⁶

Further, there is no capitalist form of rationality at all. There are individuals who, for various reasons, some of which may be economic, represent different points of view. But since there is no general form of reason related to capitalism, it cannot be described as constitutively inadequate. Although rationalization is useful within a profit-oriented form of society, not everyone is concerned with the maximization of profit. As Aristotle already knew, a large number of people, including Marxists, and academics, are rather uninterested in doing more than meeting their ordinary needs. It follows that Lukács does not show that holism and capitalist rationality are incompatible. At most, he shows only that in virtue of their particular interests some individuals within modern society (in practice almost everyone) are incapable of the general perspective typical of a certain type of philosophical thought.

Lukács's argument is Kantian in its insistence on the impossibility for non-Marxist thought to lead to knowledge. This analysis counts at most against the extension of the argument against classical philosophy to modern society in general. It does not count against its other forms, including the comprehension of the economic structure of capitalism or the utility of philosophy. As concerns political economy, he follows in Marx's wake. A series of titles clearly indicates Marx's concern to criticize what Marxists call bourgeois political economy.⁴⁷ Lukács's general point is that the non-Marxist economic angle of vision is intrinsically flawed. With respect to bourgeois economics he is not merely stating that there are certain factors that for contingent reasons have so far not been understood. On the contrary, he is making a much stronger,

quasi-Kantian point about the intrinsic impossibility of comprehending the economic structure of society from the angle of vision of contemporary capitalism.

He now restates Marx's thesis from an epistemological angle of vision. According to Lukács, bourgeois political economy is in principle incapable of a grasp of the nature of economic activity; for it does not and cannot understand the basic factors of modern capitalism. "Marx has often demonstrated convincingly how inadequate the 'laws' of bourgeois economics are to the task of explaining the true movement of economic activity *in toto*. He has made it clear that this limitation lies in the—methodologically inevitable—failure to comprehend use-value and real consumption."⁴⁸ In other words, the failure of non-Marxist political economy to comprehend contemporary society is in some sense rooted in the nature of capitalism itself.

Lukács follows Marx closely in his remarks on the inadequacy of non-Marxist political economy. But he does not argue the claim. He shows neither that non-Marxist economic thought is inadequate to a "total" explanation, nor that such an explanation is required. He shows no sensitivity to the different types of non-Marxist economics. Nor does he address the significance of the changes in non-Marxist economics from Marx's period to his own. In effect, he adopts a non-historical reading of non-Marxist forms of political economy that refuses to acknowledge either real or even potential differences among forms of non-Marxism. He breaks new ground in his extension of Marx's view to classical German philosophy. He objects to non-Marxist philosophy because of its distance from the reality of daily life. He maintains that the formalism typical of non-Marxist thought prevents it from providing a more than partial analysis of the social context; and he further maintains that the inability to offer a general view of society condemns it to an inadequate fragmentation.

His argument reminds us of the complaint, frequent in modern

philosophy, that prior thought is insufficiently radical, that the problem of knowledge has yet to be raised with sufficient care. He believes that the epistemological question has never been posed in a systematic manner. In virtue of its specialization and formalization, non-Marxist philosophy is unwilling and in any case strictly unable to rise to a grasp of the social context as a whole from an historical perspective. "Such a synthesis would only be possible if philosophy were able to change its approach radically and concentrate on the concrete material totality of what can and should be known. Only then would it be able to break through the barriers erected by a formalism that has degenerated into a state of complete fragmentation. But this would require an awareness of the causes, the genesis and the necessity of this formalism; moreover, it would not be enough to unite the special sciences mechanically: they would have to be transformed inwardly by an inwardly synthesizing philosophical method. It is evident that the philosophy of bourgeois society is incapable of this."⁴⁹

This proposed indictment of non-Marxist philosophy is exceedingly abstract. The formalism and specialization of contemporary philosophy is not typical for classical German philosophy, which Lukács constantly has in view. With the exception of the well-known formalism of Kant's ethics, Kant and Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, the greatest thinkers of this period, never, or almost never, formulate their positions in a formal manner. In his *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel was specifically concerned to unite the sciences in a non-mechanical, dialectical manner Lukács suggests is necessary for systematic knowledge.⁵⁰ Hence, this summary statement is doubtful as a description of German idealist thought. But it is significant to indicate why he regards non-Marxist philosophy as in principle inadequate and why he thinks that Marxism is in principle adequate to comprehend modern capitalism.

In the midst of his remarks on Marxian political economy, Lukács adumbrates the point he will urge in the next section of his

essay against classical German philosophy. He sees non-Marxist philosophy as compromised by its relation to the social context. For reasons linked to its role within capitalism, it is intrinsically inadequate to understand modern industrialized society, which depends for its existence on the fact that its essence is not comprehended. In his words, non-Marxist philosophy is reified through its relation to modern capitalism, and the commodity structure from which it derives, and hence is inadequate to know its object.

His objection against non-Marxist philosophy is a form of the familiar Kantian point that thought must be adequate to its object as a condition of knowledge. His argument rests on an interesting denial of the widespread philosophical assumption of the absolute independence of reason. In his insistence, following Marx, that thought is constrained by social being, he denies that thought is independent of its social context. The result is a form of contextualism, or claim that thought must be understood in and in relation to the context in which it arises. Using standard Marxist terminology, he insists that philosophy must eschew the bourgeois class perspective for what he regards as the proletarian standpoint. In a reference to the Hegelian category of the whole, or totality, he maintains that philosophy must offer a total analysis, or analysis in terms of the category of totality that further explains the relation between the various special sciences and the forces that impede an analysis of this kind within bourgeois society.

This preliminary statement of Lukács's objection to classical German thought calls for two comments concerning his understanding of the difference between Marxist and non-Marxist philosophy. First, it is interesting to note the non-Marxist sources for his defense of Marxism. He insists on the distinction in kind between Marxism and non-Marxism; but he argues for Marxism on the basis of non-Marxist concepts. These include: Plato's conception of philosophy as the science of sciences;⁵¹ Aristotle's description of the category of totality,⁵² further developed by Hegel;

Kant's examination of the conditions of knowledge as a function of the relation of subjectivity to objectivity; and the Hegelian insistence that thought is limited by its historical moment.⁵³ His synthesis here of non-Marxist ideas in defense of Marxism undercuts his basic claim for an absolute difference between Marxist and non-Marxist thought. It points, then, to the relativization of this distinction in his later writings on ontology.⁵⁴

Second, his argument provides an interesting variation on the effort underway roughly since Hegel to argue for knowledge while admitting the link between thought and its context. Earlier thinkers held that a condition of knowledge is the separation of thought from time. The problem, then, is how to make out the claim to know if thought depends on its historical moment. Lukács's solution combines Marx's claim for the intrinsic partiality of reason with a Hegelian form of holism. Non-Marxism's concern to maintain the *status quo ante* in order to maintain its own privileged position is reflected in its analyses, in particular in its failure, to understand the structure of advanced industrial society. A partial analysis falls short of truth available from the holistic perspective only, that is in the Marxist, or proletarian, point of view.

Let us assume for present purposes that thought is contaminated by time and place. Let us further assume that a holistic angle of vision is a precondition for social knowledge. Obviously, the argument turns on the supposed correlation between forms of reason and the class structure of society. But if claims to know cannot be separated from the social context, neither can they be reduced to it. It does not follow that because some views may be contaminated by their origins, this is always the case. This claim is not plausible in general; it can only be granted after a specific analysis of a particular case. Further, it is unclear that there is a universal, so-called proletarian perspective, and unclear as well that the self-appointed representatives of the proletariat possess a

holistic insight. If we postulate a universal perspective, there is no reason to link it to a particular class. And the rejection of official Marxism in eastern Europe cast doubt on the Marxist claim to represent the proletarian class.

Lukács's response is to urge the point, familiar in social science at least since Max Weber, that all knowledge is intrinsically perspectival. Lukács's version of this assertion derives from his conception of modern industrialized society. There is an intrinsic difference between the interests motivating capitalism and those motivating Marxism. As he construes capitalism, and as its name suggests, it is mainly concerned with maximizing profit in the short run in order to maximize capital. As the representative of the proletarian class, Marxism is concerned rather with whether and under what conditions it will be possible to pass beyond capitalism to another form of social organization. For Lukács claims to know, and any assertion of knowledge always presupposes a particular point of view, be it capitalist or proletarian.⁵⁵ Or to put the same point in other language, conceptual neutrality is an illusion intrinsic to the non-Marxist view of society: we reason in either an idealist or a materialist manner, since there is no possible third point of view.

Lukács is correct that the assertion of strict neutrality is an illusion. Claims to know always reflect a point of view. In different ways, this insight has surfaced since the nineteenth century in the writings of such disparate thinkers as Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Nietzsche, all of whom dispute the very idea of disinterested knowledge.⁵⁶ But it does not follow, if this point is granted, that the so-called proletarian perspective of totality is anything more than a regulative idea, another form of the illusion of knowledge.

We can sum up the discussion to this point as follows. In the analysis of political economy in the initial portion of his essay, Lukács maintains that non-Marxian political economy is intrinsically irrational. His analysis relies on a distinction between ap-

pearance and reality to argue the Marxist claim for the inadequacy of non-Marxist political economy in order to develop a version of the Kantian claim that non-Marxian economic thought is inadequate to know its object. Non-Marxist thought is concerned with a succession of appearances, whereas a grasp of the social reality presupposes the integration of the manifold aspects of the social context from the angle of vision of totality that non-Marxist thought characteristically lacks. This failure is not contingent, but due to a difference of interest that follows from the differences between the capitalist, or idealist, and proletarian, or materialist, points of view. In the second part of his essay, Lukács argues a similar claim for classical German philosophy.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER DISCUSSED Lukács's analysis of political economy in his groundbreaking essay "Reification and Class Consciousness." His argument employs a Marxist reading of Marx's theory with Kantian and neo-Kantian elements. He comprehends Marx's theory as a form of commodity-analysis. From Kantianism he appropriates the Kantian approach to the possibility of knowledge through the examination of the relation of subjectivity to objectivity, and the neo-Kantian distinction between rationality and irrationality. He argues that only Marxist political economy is capable of comprehending the economic structure of advanced industrial society. His argument consists of two main points. First, non-Marxist political economy cannot know its object, that is, the essential structure of the social context. By implication, then, so-called bourgeois political economy is irrational, since its form of thought is adequate only to grasp a false appearance. Second, Marxian, or Marxist, political economy, more precisely the Marxian theory of commodity-analysis, is capable of knowledge of social reality, and hence rational. It is further at present capable of providing the solution to all problems of any kind.

If the Marxian commodity-analysis is valid without restriction, then its validity extends beyond political economy to philosophy as well. In the second and third parts of his essay, Lukács applies his quasi-Kantian view of Marxism to classical German philosophy. His analysis includes two stages: a demonstration of the inability of the mainline German tradition to solve its problems, which are, however, significant as a reflection on the plane of thought of real social dilemmas; and a further demonstration that Marxism provides the required solution. The present chapter will study his discussion of classical German philosophy under the heading "The Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought."¹

Although his perspective is Marxist, the idiom in this section is Hegelian,² and certain insights are borrowed from Fichte, the general argument is strongly Kantian. The Kantian cast to his thought is visible in his detailed restatement of the argument, earlier made with respect to non-Marxist political economy, that classical German thought is intrinsically incapable of knowledge. This is a version of the Kantian point, here mediated through German neo-Kantianism, that classical German thought is inadequate to know its object. The claim that the perceived object must correspond to the structure of the perceiving mind as a condition of knowledge lies at the heart of the famous Copernican Revolution.³ Kant's rejection of prior thought and his adoption of the Copernican turn presuppose the inability of prior thought to know its object, the very theme that runs throughout the neo-Kantian discussion of historical knowledge. From the Kantian perspective, the failure of previous philosophy consists in its inability to show that thought corresponds to its object if objectivity is independent of subjectivity; and the critical philosophy bases its claims to know on the insight that objectivity is parasitic on, or derives from, subjectivity. Lukács's demonstration of the superiority of Marxism is Kantian since he does not argue that Marxism is advantageous when compared to its alternatives, that it is a better, or more satis-

factory, theory, for instance in virtue of its greater explanatory power; he rather argues that it provides the only possible source of knowledge since classical German philosophy is intrinsically incapable of knowledge.

There is an obvious parallel in the form of the impossibility arguments Lukács brings against non-Marxist political economy and non-Marxist philosophy. In each instance, he objects to the possibility of a rival form of knowledge. The difference between the two arguments concerns their respective content. The critique of non-Marxist political economy, which does not mention specific theories, is perfectly general. On the contrary, the attack on classical German philosophy is a concerted effort to utilize Kant's theory against German idealism and itself. This attack, which is simply dazzling in conception, depends on two points: The depiction of the thing-in-itself as the single problem that runs throughout Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy and the assimilation of classical German thought to the critical philosophy.

The main lines of the argument against classical German philosophy can be quickly sketched as a series of points about Kant's notion of the thing-in-itself. To begin with, he argues that the thing-in-itself is so central to Kant's thought that the critical philosophy stands or falls on its ability to defend this conception. Second, he maintains that this concept is equally central to all later German idealism that follows from the critical philosophy and that can fairly be seen as vainly attempting to resolve the problem to which Kant's notion refers. Finally, he claims that the inability of either Kant or post-Kantian thinkers to resolve the problem linked to the thing-in-itself is not contingent, but rather an indication of the intrinsic epistemological inability of classical German philosophy.

This argument combines both Kantian and Hegelian elements in order to demonstrate a Marxist claim. The thing-in-itself is obviously a main theme in the critical philosophy. Lukács's dualistic

analysis of it here bears the imprint of German neo-Kantianism, which tended to interpret this notion from a causal angle of vision. The conception of the entire German idealist tradition as a series of reactions to Kant's thought is, of course, not Kantian but Hegelian. Kant excluded all prior views of knowledge as in principle incorrect; but Hegel is famous for his detailed consideration of the history of philosophy. Hegel sees the different positions in the history of philosophy as united by a common concern with the problem of knowledge.⁴ For this reason, later theories build upon their predecessors.⁵ This notion applies to his own thought as well, which, like the other German idealist views, is intended to complete the Kantian revolution in philosophy.⁶ It is perhaps insufficiently known that he regards prior thought from a closely Kantian vantage point. For instance, in the important discussion of the "Attitudes of Thought to Objectivity" he identified pre-Kantian, or metaphysical, Kantian, and post-Kantian perspectives.⁷ It is, then, reasonable to approach later German idealism as an ongoing effort to resolve a Kantian problem, to complete the critical revolution in philosophy. Lukács's innovation is to apply the Hegelian vision of the unity of the philosophical tradition to the interpretation of classical German philosophy as an ongoing effort to resolve a Kantian problem. Here Kant's thing-in-itself, which Kant invoked in order to respond to the question of epistemology, takes the place of the problem of knowledge.

Lukács's objection to non-Marxist political economy presupposes Marx's commodity-analysis. To begin, he extends his analysis of classical German philosophy by relating political economy and philosophy. In an important statement, he links classical German philosophy, by which he means the views of Kant and his successors, to modern industrialized society through the concept of reification: "Modern critical philosophy springs from the reified structure of consciousness."⁸

This declaration is obviously intended, not only to deny that

philosophy is independent of the surrounding social context, but to link it to political economy. In virtue of its genesis in modern industrialized society, modern philosophy differs in two specific ways from earlier thought. To begin with, for the first time in intellectual history, philosophy arises within and is determined by a social context wholly shaped by economic forces. This claim is justified by Marx's view that the capitalist stage of social development differs from its predecessors in the degree to which economic factors penetrate throughout society. Further, modern philosophy is qualitatively unlike that of other periods because of the phenomenon of reification.

Lukács holds that thought is determined by the social context; but his argument against classical German philosophy rests on his reading of Kant's concept of the thing-in-itself and its fate in later thought. The fundamental distinction between prior philosophy and that form of thought determined by modern capitalism is symbolized by the critical turn in modern philosophy and the problem to which it responds. "In other words, modern philosophy sets itself the following problem: it refuses to accept the world as something that has arisen (or e.g. has been created by God) independently of the knowing subject, and prefers to conceive of it instead as its own product."

The Copernican turn is equally significant for Kant and later thought. Modern philosophy, as symbolized by Kant, refuses to accept the world as independent of the knowing subject, and understands it instead as its own product. For Kant, the condition of knowledge is that we know only what we ourselves bring forth. In an important passage, which in part refers to Marx's well-known comment on Vico,¹⁰ Lukács suggests that the same insight identified in Kant's thought runs throughout the whole of modern philosophy. "In ways diverging from Vico who in many respects was not understood and who became influential only much later, the whole of modern philosophy has been preoccupied with this prob-

lem. From systematic doubt and the *Cogito ergo sum* of Descartes, to Hobbes, Spinoza and Leibniz there is a direct line of development whose central strand, rich in variations, is the idea that the object of cognition can be known by us for the reason that, and to the degree in which, it has been created by ourselves. And with this, the methods of mathematics and geometry (the means whereby objects are constructed, created out of formal presuppositions of objectivity in general) and, later, the methods of mathematical physics became the guide and the touchstone of philosophy, the knowledge of the world as a totality."¹¹

Lukács's statement is significant as an effort to characterize modern philosophy through a single theme, whose analysis varies in its reflection through a variety of positions. There is an immense strategic advantage to be gained in this way. If modern philosophical thought turns on a single, identifiable problem, it is not necessary for Lukács to interpret each of the positions in the modern tradition since he can deal with this period as a whole from the perspective of a single concern. But his description of modern philosophy is inaccurate. The inaccuracies derive from an insensitive reading of the Copernican Revolution, inadmissible in an argument based on the interpretation of the thing-in-itself and surprising for an expert student of Kant. According to the Copernican Revolution, knowledge is possible neither more nor less on the hypothesis that we produce our object.¹² Kant justifies this hypothesis through the supposed failure of earlier efforts to know an independent object, that is, an object not produced by the subject of knowledge.

First, there is a basic confusion between creation and production.¹³ From Vico onwards, anti-Cartesians routinely argue that we can only know what we produce.¹⁴ But production and creation are not the same and must be distinguished. "Production" means roughly that "there is a content which is worked up into something," as for instance when a worker makes a product out

of raw materials or a sculptor makes a statue. This distinction is important if, as the ancients already maintained, nothing comes from nothing. Creation is something else again that has little to do with modern philosophy as such, but everything to do with theology. In conflating production and creation, Lukács only confuses and fails to clarify his basic concern. His further claim that "for the philosophers 'creation' means only the possibility of rationally comprehending the facts,"¹⁵ clearly influenced by Kant's remarks at the close of *Critique of Pure Reason*,¹⁶ only further confuses the issue. But from Lukács's angle of vision, the difference between creation and production, which separates philosophy and theology, disappears.

Second, it is false to claim that the whole of modern philosophy is concerned with knowledge of an object created by the subject. Lukács is insufficiently sensitive to a basic difference between rationalism and empiricism on the one hand and different forms of idealism on the other. Rationalism and empiricism commit us to knowing an independent object, as in the positions of Descartes and Locke. But Kant's Copernican Revolution is precisely intended to remedy the intrinsic inability to provide knowledge if the epistemological object is not in some sense produced by the epistemological subject. Later empiricists and rationalists continue to hold versions of the view, denied by Kant, that what we know is not created by us, whereas later idealists maintain that we shape the object of knowledge.¹⁷

We can distinguish between Lukács's description of modern philosophy and his end in view. His effort to refer to the modern philosophical tradition as a whole, as well as to its limits, should not be confused with a desire to provide a history of modern philosophy, not even, as he says, in outline. His description of the relation of philosophy to modern society follows the claim by Marx and Marxism that thought is dependent on social being. He holds that the modern turn to mathematical methods as the model

of thought that has been accepted by the entire rationalist tradition is not a mere contingent fact, but follows from the relation of modern philosophy to the social context from which it springs. He writes: "For we are not concerned to present a history of modern philosophy, not even in crude outline. We wish only to sketch the *connection* between the fundamental problems of this philosophy and the *basis in existence* from which these problems spring and to which they strive to return by the road of the understanding. However, the character of this existence is revealed at least as clearly by what philosophy does not find problematic as by what it does. At any rate it is advisable to consider the interaction between these two aspects. And if we put the question in this way we then perceive that the salient characteristic of the whole epoch is the equation which appears naive and dogmatic even in the most 'critical' philosophers, of formal, mathematical, rational knowledge both with knowledge in general and also with 'our' knowledge."¹⁸

The objection to the uncritical assumption of formal, mathematical methods in modern philosophy in part echoes Hegel's claim that the critical philosophy is not self-critical. But it is incorrect to regard the epistemological concern with mathematical models as specifically modern since it is at least as old as Plato's thought. It is also not characteristic of the modern period in general. Hegel, for instance, clearly rejects mathematics as a source of knowledge.¹⁹ Lukács is on firmer ground in his examination of the concept of system in modern thought.

His analysis of the modern conception of system presupposes the neo-Kantian conception of rationality and finally the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself. Kant's conviction that philosophy that is not a mere rhapsody must form a system was widely influential in the later discussion.²⁰ Most of his immediate successors, including K. L. Reinhold and Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, Salomon Maimon and J. F. Fries, agreed that philosophy must take

shape as a system; but they also held that, despite the tortured architectonic form of Kant's position, the system of which he spoke was not present in the critical philosophy. Later German idealism is an ongoing effort to arrive at a viable conception of the idea of system demanded by the critical philosophy.²¹

Lukács makes two points concerning the notion of philosophy as system. First, he points out that modern rationalism aims at a particular type of system, namely total system, or system without limits. He insists that modern rationalism is centrally interested in the extension of the idea of system, which in prior forms of thought was only partial, through the concept of total system relating all the phenomena of nature and society. Second, he objects that total system is intrinsically impossible. Lukács writes: "What is novel about modern rationalism is its increasingly insistent claim that it has discovered the *principle* which connects up all phenomena which in nature and society are found to confront mankind. Compared with this, every previous type of rationalism is no more than a *partial system*."²²

Lukács is correct that modern thought, and not only the critical philosophy, from Descartes to Hegel, and more recently in Whitehead, is characterized by the concern with an idea of system that is valid (in the latter's view) for any and all items of experience.²³ Lukács bases his critique of systematicity of a version of the neo-Kantian conception of irrationality. The effort at total system fails and must fail because of the incapacity to bring the ultimate problems of human existence, so to speak, under this type of framework. Such themes appear as incommensurable, or irrational, with respect to the idea of total systematicity. The idea of total system allegedly endemic in modern thought quickly runs up against an intrinsic limit that prevents its success.

Lukács's obvious aim in his critique of system is to set the stage for a claim about limits intrinsic to modern non-Marxist thought as such.²⁴ He argues for his objection through remarks on Kant's

difficult notion of the thing-in-itself. Kant never clearly explains this theme in his thought, but he refers to it often in his writings. In perhaps his clearest statement of the doctrine, he says that the thing-in-itself can be thought of without contradiction as the cause of the phenomenon that can be thought of without contradiction as the effect.²⁵ The thing-in-itself is, then, intelligible in its actions, even if it does not appear, and sensible in its effects.²⁶ Kant believes that we need to understand this idea from both perspectives in order to make sense of it as well as of the possibility of experiential knowledge.

In the critical philosophy the idea of the thing-in-itself functions as a limit. Lukács differentiates two aspects of this Kantian theme. First, there is the problem of the content of the general forms of cognition, or categories, that we use to bring forth what we know. Second, there is the problem of the whole, or system in general, through which the different partial systems become a totality. In language he does not employ, we can say that Lukács distinguishes in a appropriately Kantian manner epistemological and ontological readings of the thing-in-itself with respect to form and to content. In a comment on Kant's remark in the *Critique of Judgment* on the importance of intelligible contingency for the problem of system, he writes: "When Kant does this we see, on the one hand, that the two quite distinct delimiting functions of the thing-in-itself (*viz.* the impossibility of apprehending the whole with the aid of the conceptual framework of the rational partial systems and the irrationality of the contents of the individual concepts) are but two sides of the one problem. On the other hand, we see that this problem is in fact of central importance for any mode of thought that undertakes to confer universal significance on rational categories."²⁷

The proposed distinction is eminently Kantian, since it follows Kant's concern to differentiate the form and content of the object of experience and knowledge. In knowledge, we are always and

necessarily confronted with two issues: on the one hand there must be content, or something that is known; on the other hand there is the question of the extent to which knowledge is possible, the difficulty of whether there is any limit at all to what can be known. Lukács holds that we need only to raise the question concerning the intrinsic limit to knowledge of the given, central to any demand for total system, to see that it cannot be met. "Thus the demand to universalize rationalism necessarily issues in the demand for a system but, at the same time, as soon as one reflects upon the conditions in which a universal system is possible, i.e. as soon as the question of the system is consciously posed, it is seen that such a demand is incapable of fulfillment."²¹

His remark about the impossibility of total system combines neo-Kantianism with Kant. He follows Kant's well-known view that knowledge of the whole is impossible. Kant maintains that we cannot extend our knowledge beyond the limits of experience to know the whole, and the whole cannot be given within a finite period of experience. Lukács now states this fundamental Kantian doctrine in curious, almost melodramatic fashion. He further follows the neo-Kantians in denying in principle total cognizability of the given. He sees the difference between classical German philosophy—roughly the tradition emanating from Kant and ending in Hegel—and continental rationalism in the appreciation of the given. Unlike the rationalists, classical German philosophy does not dismiss the facticity of the given, whose incommensurability it recognizes.

Classical German philosophy paradoxically acknowledges the facticity and hence incommensurability of the given on the one hand and strives to provide total system on the other. "It is evident that the principle of systematization is not reconcilable with the recognition of any 'facticity', of a 'content' which in principle cannot be deduced from the principle of form and which, therefore, has simply to be accepted as actuality. The greatness, the

paradox and the tragedy of classical German philosophy lies in the fact that—unlike Spinoza—it no longer dismisses every *donné* [*sic*] as non-existent, causing it to vanish behind the monumental architecture of the rational forms produced by the understanding. Instead, while grasping and holding on to the irrational character of the actual contents of the concepts it strives to go beyond this, to overcome it and to erect a system. But from what has already been said it is clear what the problem of the actually given means for rationalism: *viz.* that it cannot be left to its own being and existence, for in that case it would remain ineluctably ‘contingent’. Instead it must be wholly absorbed into the rational system of the concepts of the understanding.”²⁹

It is no accident that Lukács illustrates his claim about classical German thought in general through remarks on Fichte’s theory. Fichte’s position is well suited to this phase of Lukács’s argument for three reasons. First, Fichte’s theory is usually believed to lie at the antipodes of Marx’s thought. It is known that Fichte was widely, but mistakenly, held to maintain that the subject simply “creates” its world, precisely the point Lukács urges about modern philosophy in general.³⁰ Second, he can simply take over Lask’s analysis of Fichte’s view with respect to irrationality.³¹ Third, and most surprising, Lukács’s positive solution of the dilemma of classical German thought is based on a Fichtean reading of the proletariat.

Following Lask, Lukács maintains that this insight is not clearly expressed by Fichte in his middle period in the term *projectio per hiatus irrationalem*, that is, the idea of objects of which no account can be given. The understanding that social reality is there before us and cannot simply be deduced from, or equated with, our thought is finally to leave behind an era of philosophical dogmatism that made this or similar claims. This insight did not immediately lead to study of the given. Rather, it led to the renunciation of metaphysics as well as to a series of special, partial systems

correlated with the special, or nonphilosophical sciences, Lukács believes that as soon as we attempt to extend knowledge beyond the restricted form it takes in the special sciences and partial systems, the unsolved problem of the irrational given reappears. The interest of classical German philosophy is that at this point the deepest of all epistemological problems, which has constantly been lurking below the surface of all discussions of knowledge, finally rises to the surface, where it can be consciously addressed and thought through to the end.

Understood as a drive for total system, Lukács is correct that classical German philosophy ends in a blind alley of which the concept of the thing-in-itself as what can and must be thought but cannot be known is only the most visible sign.³² If that is the case, German thought is finally unable to deal with the task it sets itself, which he summarizes now from a Fichtean perspective: "It had to strive to find the subject of thought which could be thought of as producing existence without any *hiatus irrationalis* or transcendental thing-in-itself."³³

By implication a solution to the problem of the given would require a theory of the subject as "producing" existence as a seamless web, so to speak, without any *hiatus irrationalis*, or transcendental thing-in-itself. In his search for a solution the Kantian problem, Lukács discerns a denial of the concept of the *hiatus irrationalis*, introduced in Fichte's middle period, in his last text.³⁴ The intended result is to transcend the duality of subject and object, subjectivity and objectivity. It follows that the duality that undermines the effort at system substitutes for what Lukács, here following Hegel's Fichte interpretation, calls an identical subject-object.

For purposes of his discussion, Lukács uncritically appropriates Hegel's controversial interpretation of Fichte in order to uncover a solution of the problem of classical German philosophy.³⁵ His attitude toward Fichte is both positive and negative. He is critical of

the Fichtean concept of activity, whose importance lies in a prototypical solution of the relation of theory and praxis, subjectivity and objectivity. He follows others who maintain that Fichte fails to understand the true nature of human activity, which he assimilates to mental activity only.³⁶ Fichtean activity is significant as a contribution to the Kantian problem. Kant made theory dependent on practice since problems not amenable to theoretical analysis can nevertheless be resolved in practice. Fichte goes beyond Kant in correctly locating the unity of subject and object in activity. Through his rethinking of the unity of subject and object as activity³⁷ he opens the path to the view that the given can be understood as the product of the identical subject-object, and the duality can be derived from this unity. The importance of Fichte's view for Lukács becomes clear in his argument that the unity of subject and object that Fichte allegedly locates in mental activity is, in fact, brought about through the activity of the proletariat.

The problem that Fichte resolves through his conception of activity is most apparent in Kant's view of ethics. Lukács follows numerous other commentators in his description of the Kantian ethical theory as purely formal; he is most original in his claim that the theory ends in the unsolved methodological problem of the thing-in-itself.³⁸ His aim is to show that Kant's supposed inability to understand freedom in a meaningful sense derives from his incapacity to grasp the unity of subjectivity and objectivity.

The weakest aspect of Lukács's analysis is the link he establishes between the relation of theory and practice and the conception of the thing-in-itself. The concept of the thing-in-itself is introduced by Kant in the context of an examination of the conditions of knowledge in general. The relation of theory and practice concerns the utility of claims to know. Kant's grasp of the relation of theory to practice is complicated by his acceptance of the traditional claim that pure theory is practically relevant. His formalistic analysis of ethics tends to undercut that inference. But other than

the mere assertion, Lukács provides no reason to conclude that Kant's difficulties in this regard follow from his conception of the thing-in-itself. One way to make out the argument is to claim with Kierkegaard that practice, what he calls "existence," is beyond mere theoretical comprehension. But this avenue is closed to a Marxist who argues for the transparency of practice to the Marxist vision.

Following the neo-Kantians, Lukács's solution is to differentiate forms of reason inadequate and adequate to grasp practice. He believes that an acceptable analysis of the unity of theory and practice is possible only on the basis of a prior distinction between practice and the theoretical, contemplative attitude.³⁹ In this way, he resurrects the Aristotelian distinction between two different realms that is destroyed in the Kantian resorption of practice into theory.⁴⁰ By implication, Kant's ethical theory is irrelevant since it is unable to grasp human practice. It is, then, an illustration of the old saw that a view can be correct in theory but incorrect in practice.

Through his critique of Kant's ethical formalism, Lukács raises the traditional theme of the social relevance of philosophy.⁴¹ In different ways, this point is raised by numerous thinkers in the modern tradition, including Hegel and Marx, Wittgenstein, Husserl, and Heidegger. Lukács regrets that Marx never worked out the transition from existence to practice mentioned in his dissertation and constantly presupposed in his method. Kant's difficulty in demonstrating the social utility of philosophy arises from his effort to drive a wedge between the pure subject and the human being in order to transform the knower into a purely formal subject. The critical philosophy is merely a special instance of the more general embarrassment that philosophy faces in demonstrating its traditional claim to social relevance.

There is a difference between the problem of the relation of theory and practice that concerns the social utility of theory on the

one hand and the purely epistemological link between the conceptions of the knower and the known on the other. Lukács's analysis helpfully reveals an objective tension in classical German thought, well illustrated by the critical philosophy, between the view that we know only what we in some sense bring forth and the persistent stress on a pure and purely formal understanding of subjectivity. Now following the neo-Kantian line, he maintains that the difficulty does not lie in Kant's description of the object; it lies rather in the object itself.

Lukács now draws three conclusions.⁴² First, he maintains that in classical German philosophy the powers beyond human control assume a different character. In place of blind fate, we find the appeal to an idea of universal mathematics.⁴³ The subject appears as remote and passive, as incapable of shaping its own destiny. Second, there is a tendency to assimilate human relations to natural laws and to understand nature as an objective, or non-social, category, correlated with the view of the subject as an abstract entity. Both observations are supported by later philosophical discussion. The most recent example of view of the subject as passive is Heidegger's insistence that history is shaped by Being present under the mode of absence, to which human being can only listen but which it cannot influence.⁴⁴ The effort to understand human being through abstract models has lately turned to the simulation of the human mind in the field of artificial intelligence.⁴⁵

Before drawing the third conclusion, he turns briefly to Engels.⁴⁶ These controversial remarks, in a work aimed at Marxist orthodoxy, are certainly remarkable. They reflect a dispute between Lukács—newly converted to the Marxist faith, hence prone to zealotry—and the founder of Marxism. On reflection, Lukács could not easily avoid criticizing Engels for at least two reasons. First, and most obviously, Engels's rather simplistic Marxism offers a cardinal example of the problem Lukács wishes to avoid: the assimilation of human relations to natural relations. The result

is to make it difficult, or even impossible, to envisage a change in the social context. Second, if, as Engels suggests, it is possible to eliminate the concept of the thing-in-itself as a simple misunderstanding, then it circumvents the need for Lukács's magisterial effort to depict Marxism as finally resolving the Kantian problem that is the central problem of classical German philosophy.

Lukács's critique of Engels is profoundly significant for Marxism, which has always claimed an intrinsic continuity with Marx's position. He quotes Engels's naive, incorrect effort to refute the thing-in-itself. And he points out Engels's deep-seated misunderstanding of the idea of practice as in some sense equivalent to science and industry. It is a basic error to take the idea of theoretical activity as somehow the same as a practical activity, in effect to collapse the very distinction between the theoretical and practical realms that Lukács desires to defend against the critical philosophy.

Through his criticism of Engels Lukács appears to drive a conceptual wedge between Marx and the founder of the Marxist movement. They are not the same and their views are, in fact, to be differentiated. It is a mistake, however, to think that Lukács rejects a fundamental Marxist tenet because he criticizes Engels. In fact, his criticism essentially concerns Engels's naive grasp of the Kantian idea of the thing-in-itself. For Lukács agrees with Engels that in the final analysis Marx's theory does resolve the problems of classical German philosophy through the turn to practice. If the central problem of classical German philosophy—as Lukács maintains in this essay—is the Kantian thing-in-itself, then the turn to practice is sufficient to resolve the problem posed by this Kantian concept. That Lukács in part retracted his criticism of Engels in the second edition of his book⁴⁷ and muted it in later writings is entirely consistent with his acceptance in general of Engels's view of Marxism.

Returning from the excursus on Engels to the main topic,

Lukács now raises his third point in a criticism of the critical philosophy. The Kantian perspective leads to an unresolved dualism, symbolized by an inability to overcome such dichotomies as freedom and necessity, or voluntarism and fatalism. Kant falls below the level of Fichte, his greatest disciple, whose theory of activity provides the first indication of how the dualism intrinsic to the critical philosophy can be overcome. Kant is important because he does not attempt to conceal, but, in fact, acknowledges this difficulty.

Although he rejects the critical philosophy and later German idealism, Lukács paradoxically stresses the importance of their concerns. He differs in this way from thinkers such as Rudolph Carnap, who reject a given form of thought in general, or Wittgenstein, who appeared to reject the problems of philosophy with which he was deeply engaged.⁴ The German philosophical tradition is not occupied with mere fancies, or even fantasy, but with issues of great significance. Following G. V. Plekhanov's so-called antinomy, namely that human being appears as a product of the social context, which is itself produced by human being, he maintains that social reality is the basis from which the philosophical problem springs. "On the one hand, *man appears as the product of his social milieu*, whereas, on the other hand, *the social milieu is produced by 'public opinion,' i.e., by man.*"⁴⁹

Lukács now illustrates the problem of the relation of human beings to the social context through a glance at the different views of nature. These include, to begin with, views of nature as the aggregate of systems of law, prominent in natural science and taken over into philosophy by Kant. Second, there is a rather different value concept, associated, for instance, with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who regarded nature as the collection of tendencies opposed to mechanization, dehumanization, and reification. Finally, there is the idea of nature as what has grown organically and is not created by men and women. As part of the epistemological

problem, philosophy after Kant is concerned with how to understand nature and the relation of humans to nature. Friedrich Schiller's role is crucial. In terms of his concept of play, he argues that a generalized idea of aesthetics enables us to overcome the difference between human beings and nature in order to become fully human. In a word, a person is only fully a person when he or she plays.⁵⁰

Unquestionably, the conception of nature influences the understanding of knowledge.⁵¹ The comprehension of nature is an aspect of the view of the given important for the neo-Kantian perspective. Lukács now takes a more Kantian, idealistic line in order to grasp the object as a function of subjectivity. Philosophy after Fichte clearly surpasses the rationalistic perspective of such thinkers as Leibniz and Spinoza. The issue is no longer the problem of the "creation" of an objective system of reality on the model of geometry, but how to grasp human creation. In other words, as Lukács also says, the problem is to create the subject of the creator.

The result, in effect, is to resolve the Kantian dualism between the subject and the given in Fichtean fashion through a revised view of subjectivity as the source of objectivity. The solution of the problem of knowledge does not lie in closer or different scrutiny of the object, but in a different understanding of the subject. Although critical of the Kantian view of subjectivity, Lukács preserves a fundamental Kantian insight: the key to the epistemological problem lies in a revised view of subjectivity.

Through the revised view of the subject in post-Kantian German thought, as Lukács points out, the discussion transcends mere epistemology, at least in its pure form.⁵² We are no longer concerned, as was Kant, with the possible conditions of thought and action.⁵³ We are concerned now with the reconstitution of the unity of subject and object. A key move lies in the appeal to the dialectical method superseding the rationalistic approach in order

to dissolve the rigid antitheses the latter is, in principle, unable to overcome. In a passage on the nature of dialectic, he writes that "the dialectical process, the ending of a rigid confrontation of rigid forms, is enacted essentially between *the subject and the object*."⁵⁴

Dialectic provides the key to the understanding of history. In classical German philosophy, Hegel founds a new, dialectical form of logic, the logic of the concrete concept, or totality, in order to comprehend the relation between subject and object. The result is a crucial epistemological turn to history. In a restatement of his claim for Marxism as a conceptual *vade mecum*, Lukács asserts that in history we find the solution for almost every unsolved problem.⁵⁵ But a dialectical theory of history in itself is insufficient, since in that case the *terminus ad quem* would lie in Hegel's thought. In order to make out the claim for Marxism, it is crucial to distinguish views of history in Marxism and classical German philosophy. In response, he urges the Kantian point on familiar Marxist grounds, namely, that classical philosophy was not, and could not become, fully conscious of the logical necessity of the link between genesis and history for social and historical reason.⁵⁶ In sum, in virtue of the rise of modern industrial society, which depends for its very existence on ignorance of its essence, non-Marxist thought was prevented from a full comprehension of this essential insight.

The proposed demonstration develops a variant of Lask's neo-Kantian view that a theory of historical knowledge requires knowledge of individual events. Lukács holds that classical German thought suffers from an inherent methodological flaw that effectively prevents knowledge of history. Its appeal to a quasi-mathematical conception of law and the idea of formal calculability point to a method that is adapted only to grasp immutable relations but that cannot comprehend novel events. It is only when we invoke the concrete and total historical process that we over-

come the rigidity between the autonomy of the subjects and the concepts of objects. Lukács writes: "With this point of view the two main strands of the irrationality of the thing-in-itself and the concreteness of the individual content and of totality are given a positive turn and appear as a unity. This signals a change in the relation between theory and practice and between freedom and necessity. The idea that we have made reality loses its more or less fictitious character."⁷ But Lukács parts company with Lask in his rejection of any skepticism about historical knowledge, for the concrete totality of the world as a historical process renders such understanding possible.

It is obviously one thing to appeal to the concrete totality of the historical process and quite another to provide the required demonstration. In general, there is an insuperable distinction between subjectivity and objectivity that cannot be overcome, since, as Lukács precisely asserts, there is an unavoidable tension between the acknowledgment of facticity and its deduction from the principle of form. In his rationalistic stress on subjectivity Lukács contradicts this point. His concern to grasp the object, the social context, and history as a concrete totality through the subject's activity necessarily denies any given. It is, then, no accident that Lukács understands the modern tradition as concerned with knowledge as a function of the subject's creation of the object. For it is only in this way that he can make out his clearly Promethean, Marxist analysis of knowledge solely through a revised, quasi-Fichtean conception of subjectivity, presented as the solution to the dichotomy introduced by Kant's thing-in-itself.

Lukács closely follows the Marxist approach to Marx through Hegel's thought. This leads him abusively to attribute crucial insights to speculative idealism, including the idea of the active subject and the crucial turn to history. The idea of activity as the unity of subjectivity and objectivity was earlier attributed to Fichte, and the historical turning was on the agenda since Kant's

middle period.⁵⁸ Through Hegel's perspective we rise to the problem of the active subject. For it is finally only in history that we discover the unity of subject and object that was the concern of epistemology. The solution lies in exhibiting the concrete we, the "real" or actual historical subject. The putative result is a unity, or totality, that transforms the irrationality of the thing-in-itself as it emerges in Kant's thought by making it possible to grasp individual content and its relation to the whole.

Lukács believes that Hegel is aware of, but unable to resolve, the problem of concrete totality. He cannot offer a satisfactory analysis of the link between the subject of action and the subject of genesis. At this point, classical German philosophy recoiled from the solution for reasons comprehensible only from the perspective of another, higher theory. "However, at this point classical philosophy turned back and lost itself in the endless labyrinth of conceptual mythology. It will be our task in the next section to explain why it was unable to discover the concrete subject of genesis, the methodologically indispensable subject-object. At this stage it is only necessary to indicate what obstacle it encounters as a result of this aberrancy."⁵⁹

Since Lukács is committed to the reading of Marx's theory as the inversion of Hegel's, he cannot understand it other than from a Marxist perspective. It must be the case that speculative idealism provides an abstract form of the correct notion of subjectivity. Hegel comes close, but also fails in his effort to determine the historical subject. In Hegel's thought the spirit of a people seems to be only the subject of history, which is in fact produced by the world spirit acting through the various peoples. He fails to provide a concrete explanation of the historical process within history, since he is forced to seek its real subject beyond history.

Lukács adduces three reasons, all well known in the Hegel literature, for Hegel's supposed failure to provide an adequate concept

of the historical subject. First, the relation of reason to history is merely contingent, since reason is not actually immanent in history. This is a version of the familiar Marxian view that Hegel begins from an abstract, theoretical perspective that never grasps the social and historical context. Second, Hegel supposes that history has an end and that it lies in the Prussian state. Here Lukács restates the frequent claim that in his later thought Hegel turned away from the revolutionary ideals of his youth and assumed a reactionary political stance.⁶⁰ Third, in the *Encyclopedia*, in an abstract, contemplative discussion, he separates genesis from history in a merely logical analysis of the transition from logic through nature to spirit. The resultant conception of the absolute only seems to make history. This is a form of the well-known assertion, which Lukács never abandons, that Hegel's philosophy is finally a panlogism.

For Lukács, Hegel's supposed inability to formulate a satisfactory theory of history is significant for classical German philosophy, which peaks in his thought, for German idealism fails to break the mold imposed by rationalism in order to resolve the antinomies it faced. Classical German philosophy had as its aim to destroy bourgeois philosophy, which it finally only mirrored in the form of an unresolved antinomy arising in its analysis of the relation between the subject and object. The merit of the German idealist tradition lies in pointing through its method toward the way beyond these limits. The correct path lies in a return to the early Marx's discovery of the true historical subject. Through the dialectical method as the true historical method, we identify the real "we" of the historical process in the proletariat as the identical subject-object of history. Lukács writes: "The continuation of that course which at least in method started to point the way beyond these limits, namely the dialectical method as the true historical method, was reserved for the class which was able to discover

within itself on the basis of its life-experience the identical subject-object, the subject of action, the 'we' of the genesis: namely the proletariat."⁶¹

There is an obvious historical antecedent for Lukács's assertion. The claim for the proletarian standpoint as the solution to the problem emerging from the thing-in-itself as a transparent restatement of the Young Hegelian view that philosophy comes to an end in Hegel's thought. In other words, the theory of the proletariat discovered by Marx and continued by Marxism provides the solution for the problem raised, but left unsolved, by classical German philosophy. In the final analysis, philosophy does not end in the Hegelian synthesis; rather, it is completed and comes to an end in the Marxian transformation of absolute idealism, prolonged seamlessly in Marxism.

We can sum up the discussion so far as follows. Lukács's analysis of classical German philosophy is the second phase of an argument based on the conviction that at this stage in the history of humankind there is no problem that is not susceptible to a solution from the perspective of commodity-analysis. His critique of classical German thought generalizes Lask's neo-Kantian view of the uncognizability of the particular object. He suggests that, from the subject's angle of vision, there is an unresolved dualism between subject and object, or subjectivity and objectivity, in virtue of which the object cannot be known.

Lukács's analysis fails to convince. He is unable to show that classical German philosophy is in principle unable to resolve the Kantian problem that is supposedly solved by Marxist materialism. His analysis falters at a number of crucial points, for instance in his conflation of the neo-Kantian view of the irrational status of the object, or given, and the hyperrationalist concern to deduce the given from the subject's activity through an abusive reading of Fichte. One does not need to deny the Kantian dichotomy to deny that Lukács has shown that classical German philosophy is inca-

pable of overcoming it. Even if for purposes of argument we grant that Lukács has shown that some forms of non-Marxist philosophy are unable to overcome the Kantian dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity, he has not shown that non-Marxist thought as such is epistemologically inadequate. Nor has he shown that non-Marxism is inadequate in virtue of its relation to the social context.

The Standpoint of the Proletariat

THE DISCUSSION OF THE PROLETARIAN ANGLE of vision forms the third and final part of Lukács's great essay. In the first section, devoted to the phenomenon of reification, he argued the absolute superiority of Marx's view of political economy over all alternatives. In the second, he maintained that classical German philosophy is confronted with real problems that, for intrinsic methodological reasons, it cannot solve. In the concluding part, he argues that the real but unsolved problems of classical German philosophy are resolved from the perspective of Marx's commodity-analysis identified with the proletarian point of view.

This argument rests on two main assertions. On the one hand, it follows the familiar Marxist revision of the Hegelian reading of philosophy in favor of Marxism. On the other, it asserts an identity between the interests of the proletarian class and Marx's conception of commodity-analysis, and that this perspective provides the only correct approach to knowledge. Thus, Marxism provides the resolution of the problems of philosophy because Marx discovered the proper methodological approach (unavailable to the

abstract reasoning of classical German thought) in the concrete analysis of the economic basis of social life.

These assertions require separate consideration. Lukács's version of the relation of Marxism to philosophy differs in his insistence on the philosophical character of Marxism's contribution. He takes a familiar Hegelian view of the relation of Marx and Marxism to classical German philosophy. Just as Hegel saw his own position as building upon and carrying forward the positive features of prior theories, so Lukács sees Marxism as going beyond classical German philosophy to resolve the problems at which prior thought only aimed. Marxism is both continuous and discontinuous with non-Marxist philosophy. It continues German philosophy through a concern with unresolved problems remaining on the intellectual agenda, which are not false, and which require our attention. In this sense, Marxism follows directly on the heels of prior thought. The decisive methodological difference lies in Marx's introduction of a new angle of vision, identified inconsistently as commodity-analysis or the category of totality.

The analysis of the proletarian standpoint is intended to demonstrate this analysis as a methodological change that differentiates it from and resolves the problems of prior thought. This part of the discussion carries further Marx's conception of the proletariat. In the "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," one of his earliest texts, Marx makes three points worth recalling here. First, the proletariat is the class that represents the future end of all classes in the dissolution of the class structure of society.¹ Second, the proletariat and philosophy are intrinsically linked since each depends on the other. The proletariat needs philosophy for the theoretical analysis that underlies practice, and philosophy requires the proletariat in order to effect the necessary transition from mere theory to practice.² Third, the realization of either philosophy or the proletariat depends on the realization of the other, which in turn entails the abolition of both.³

The obscure Marxian conception of the reciprocal dependence of the proletariat and philosophy is a key to Lukács's reading of Marx's methodological innovation. It is clear that in theory the proletariat could be abolished by the transition to a classless society in which no class, not even the proletarian class, existed; but it is unclear how this transition could bring about the realization of philosophy. Philosophy has traditionally been concerned with problems that cannot be resolved in any simple sense that can be analyzed and debated, but that, like the philosophical debate, remain open. Marx takes a different line, closer to the early Wittgenstein and some forms of positivism. He maintains somewhat romantically that human being only sets itself problems that it can resolve.⁴ In Marx's normative view, intractable theoretical questions, the main content of the philosophical tradition and its staple fare ever since its beginning, are not meaningful. Theoretical questions are to be resolved in practice.⁵ A philosophical problem is meaningful if and only if it can possibly be solved in a practical manner. Philosophy, then, is like engineering since it takes up human problems to which human beings can find definitive solutions. In practice it can be difficult to build a bridge over a river; the actual building of the bridge may have to wait until the sufficiently gifted engineer comes along and the necessary materials are available in sufficient quantity and quality; it is never theoretically impossible to build the bridge.

Marx's normative conception of philosophy—as concerned with problems amenable to practical solutions—informs his insistence on the realization of philosophy by the proletariat. Lukács accepts Marx's view that the role of philosophy is to bring about human emancipation. His contribution is to suggest that the proletariat can realize philosophy since the very concept of the proletariat, that is, the specific proletarian standpoint, resolves the unsolved problems of classical German thought.

His line of reasoning, which closely follows Marx's, can be reconstructed in the following way. The aim of philosophy is to

bring about human freedom. But human freedom requires the emergence of the proletariat as the class to end all classes. When this occurs, when the class structure of society has been abolished, the problem of philosophy will have been solved. If Marxism brings this end about, then it also solves the problem of philosophy. In sum, Lukács finds in the concept of the proletariat the resolution of the unresolved problems of classical German idealism. Since the entire philosophical tradition leads up to classical German idealism, which comes to a peak in Hegel's thought, by inference, through the concept of the proletariat the philosophical tradition is brought to a successful close.

The analysis begins with a reference to Marx's remarks on the special role assigned to the proletariat in world history.⁶ Marx's claim for the proletariat as the dissolution of the world order is recast as the identical subject-object of the social and historical processes of evolution. In the proletariat we find the key to overcoming the dualism with which classical German philosophy wrestled unsuccessfully in the period from Kant to Hegel and which is only resolved through the return to Marxism. It must be admitted that Marx never makes the latter point, which Lukács reads into him. From a practical perspective, Marx sees the proletariat as containing within itself the dissolution of the old world order. This view is one-sided and incomplete since it lacks a theoretical basis for the practical conclusion. Theoretical problems find their resolution in practice, but practice requires a theoretical basis. Lukács accepts Marx's point, which he supplements with the further point that the proletarian perspective provides the solution to the philosophical problems arising from classical German philosophy. With this brilliant stroke he provides the theoretical underpinning for Marx's practical claim as well as a concrete approach to Marx's theoretical advance on prior German thought.

If the self-development of the proletariat requires the realization of the objective aims of society as a whole, which in turn depend

on the status of the proletariat as an identical subject-object, then the solution of the problems of classical German philosophy is the key to social emancipation. Engels's view of Marxism as science depends on the denial of the traditional claim for the social function of philosophy. In Lukács's reading of the proletariat as an identical subject-object Marxism recovers its philosophical status and through its revolutionary potential philosophy recovers its social utility. Bourgeois class consciousness, represented in idealism, is not useful for the realization of human being; as essentially conservative it tends to preserve the status quo, which corresponds to its own interest. But proletarian class consciousness, represented in materialism, has a revolutionary potential that bursts the bounds of capitalism. Lukács's analysis combines assertions for practical results and theoretical truth. In Lukács's view of the proletariat as the identical subject-object, it is both the historical outcome and the manifestation of the truth of German philosophy.⁷ In his own way, hence, and despite his critique of idealism, Lukács's claim repeats Hegel's claim that the real is the rational.⁸

According to Lukács, the difference between idealism and materialism concerns the correct vantage point on a single historical given (which remains invariant from different perspectives). "To put it more concretely: the objective reality of social existence is in its immediacy 'the same' for both proletariat and bourgeoisie."⁹ This claim is a substantive error. As the recent discussion of incommensurability reminds us, the categorical framework determines the perceived object.¹⁰ A change of categorical paradigm literally alters what one sees. The world of the Greeks is not our world; and it is doubtful that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are confronted with the same reality.¹¹ Further, the same concepts function differently when the categorical frameworks in which they are embedded change.¹²

In his argument in favor of Marxism, Lukács opposes two main theories of the given, of what, finally, is the correct historical per-

spective.¹³ The so-called bourgeois, idealist, or non-Marxist, theory asserts that historical knowledge is merely subjective, but it is nonetheless possible to penetrate to the essence of the situation. The subjectivity of the historian is eliminated through an appeal to objective historical values. But there are two defects in this approach. First, the bourgeois historian presupposes cultural values that provide the conceptual framework and hence, like the thing-in-itself, cannot be understood within it. Second, it suffers from the supposed inability to resolve the problem of totality. In response, Lukács maintains that the question of methodology must be raised for universal history as well as for each historical moment.

Any claim to know needs to examine its own conditions, what Kant called the question of *quid juris*. Despite assertions to the contrary, there is no known way to scrutinize the presuppositions of a theory from within.¹⁴ In his famous boat simile that compares philosophy to a ship that needs to be rebuilt while at sea, Neurath has clearly understood the unavoidable paradox due to the epistemological obligation to fulfill a condition that cannot be met.¹⁵ If the problem of totality demands total theoretical transparency, then this requirement cannot be satisfied from any perspective.

In the context of his analysis of the difference between the bourgeois and proletarian perspectives, Lukács comments on history as an epistemological problem. His remarks are an effort to rethink the concept of history that emerges from classical German thought and reaches its peak in Hegel's view with particular attention to the conception of the historical subject. He sees Hegel's position as flawed by its appeal to a mythological concept of the absolute, which expresses a manifest inability to understand the real historical subject, the proletarian class, or identical subject-object. But this criticism is difficult to evaluate since it depends for its force on prior acceptance of Marxism as the outcome of classical German philosophy. In Lukács reading of Marxism, the conception of the

proletariat corresponds to the role of the absolute in speculative idealism. Unless and until Lukács can show that the proletariat is, in fact, the identical subject-object of history, then this notion is hardly less mythological than the one it is intended to replace. It is, then, significant that he later denied his original view of an identical subject-object on the grounds of its intrinsic Hegelianism.¹⁶ Whatever else it is, Lukács's Marxist conception of the proletariat is as metaphysical as the Hegelian view of the absolute.

Lukács's approach at this point is obviously influenced by neo-Kantianism, above all by Rickert's teleological effort to regard the moments of the historical process from the perspective of an ongoing, progressive realization.¹⁷ In part following Rickert, he maintains that history is neither a simple aggregate of its moments, nor a transcendent heuristic principle; it is rather a real historical power that has not, so far, been understood. Historical knowledge must grasp the forms that underlie the interaction between human beings and their surroundings at any particular moment, but that are not themselves transhistorical. Such structural forms are only accessible from the point of view of totality. For the forms of mediation that surpass mere immediate knowledge of the historical given can be gained only in the structural principles and the real tendencies of the objects themselves.

In essence, then, he is insisting on something like Spinoza's view of the necessary parallel between thought and being as a condition of knowledge. Lukács makes this point in a remark on the identity in principle between intellectual genesis and historical genesis. "In other words, intellectual genesis must be identical in principle with historical genesis."¹⁸ The methodology cannot be merely transcendent with respect to the content, out of which it must somehow arise on pain of confronting only a series of irrational facts in terms of unrelated formal laws. The alternative, acceptable procedure is to seek immediacy through the process of conceptual mediation that effectively unites both form and matter in a single

complex. This is not only Hegel's view, but, as Lukács stresses, Marx's as well, as witness the latter's critique of political economy.¹⁹ But since non-Marxist thought is unable to provide such mediation, it becomes polarized into the incompatible extremes of great individuals as the makers of history,²⁰ and the natural laws of the historical environment, the approach illustrated, for example, by non-Marxist historians.

Lukács has so far argued that the intellectual genesis and the historical genesis must coincide in an acceptable theory. He now identifies two conditions that must be fulfilled by such a theory.²¹ First, the categories of explanation must be immanent in the historical process; they must not be imposed on it, as in Hegel's appeal to the absolute. Second, the relation among the categories must also be immanent in the historical process in order that knowledge consist in what is uncovered within, and not merely projected onto, the empirical given. It follows that we cannot understand the world in a merely immanent way as given in experience since we grasp its objectivity precisely by surpassing the immediately given.²² We achieve objective knowledge through categories that can be known on an abstract plane through abstraction, but that are intrinsic to, and illustrated in, the immediate historical context.

Even in his most abstract passages, the question of the social utility of philosophy is never far from Lukács's mind. In an aside, he notes that the problem of the ought is raised in general in any turning to empirical reality. There is a related, more specific problem that arises in the capacity to relate the immediately given to the system of values. That which, in contemporary terminology, is a form of the is-ought problem arising in Hume's thought, recurs in the critical philosophy in Kant's inability to bring together the analyses of what is and what ought to be in a larger whole. Hegel's analysis of this difficulty under the idea of an infinite progression provides a merely illusory solution. A proper approach

does not inject an ought into the historical process from a transcendent position, rather, it discovers the ought within the process, immanent, as it were, within the authentic objective structure.²³

Lukács sums up his claim for the proletarian perspective in an appropriately general statement. The proletarian standpoint enables us to resolve problems intractable from the perspective of bourgeois thought.²⁴ "Of course, the knowledge yielded by the standpoint of the proletariat stands on a higher scientific plane objectively; it does after all apply a method that makes possible the solution of the problems which the greatest thinkers of the bourgeois era have vainly struggled to find and in its substance, it provides the adequate historical analysis of capitalism which must remain beyond the grasp of bourgeois thinkers."²⁵

Here we need to differentiate Lukács's romantic, heroic language from his epistemological claim. Once again, he asserts but fails to show either that bourgeois thought is intrinsically incapable of knowledge or that Marxism resolves problems unresolved in classical German philosophy. His argument is most interesting as an effort to reconcile a categorical perspective that denies the sufficiency of immediate, intuitive experience with an insistence that the categories emerge directly out of experience. The intention is to maintain objectivity by avoiding the subjective cast of thought that normally arises in idealist analysis stressing the dependence of the object on the subject. In this sense, his Marxist rejection of idealism resembles Heidegger's insistence on truth as disclosure, which is also intended to substitute realism for idealism in order to defend the categorial approach to experience.²⁶

A key element of Lukács's view is the assertion of a specifically proletarian form of consciousness.²⁷ From a non-Marxist perspective, subject and object are in a form of dialectical interaction in which each is external to the other, and the separation of subject and object cannot be overcome. According to materialism, in the

first instance social reality is the pure object of societal events. From the materialist angle of vision, in the production of capital quantity is transformed into quality, since labor is transformed into value, above all exchange-value. Since workers become aware of society through the awareness of themselves as a commodity, their consciousness is not mere consciousness of an object; it rather brings about what must be regarded as an objective structural change in the object of knowledge. But only the dialectical method can lead to knowledge of the whole. "That is to say, this antithesis [i.e. the dialectical antithesis of quantity and quality—T. R.] with all its implications is only the beginning of the complex process of mediation whose goal is the knowledge of society as a historical totality. The dialectical method is distinguished from bourgeois thought by the fact that it alone can lead to a knowledge of totality; it is also significant that such knowledge is only attainable because the relationship between parts and whole has become fundamentally different from what it is in thought based on the categories of reflection. In brief, from this point of view, the essence of the dialectical method lies in the fact that in every aspect correctly grasped by the dialectic the whole totality is comprehended and that the whole method can be unravelled from every single aspect."²⁸

This argument conflates three different points that should be kept separate (1) the specific virtues of the category of totality; (2) the limitation of this perspective to the proletarian standpoint; and (3) the effect of such knowledge. If we grant the epistemological interest of the point of view of totality, or holism, it does not follow in any obvious way that this perspective is specifically associated with or limited to members of the proletarian class, or even to those identifying with it. Lukács correlates the category of totality with a dialectical approach, but he cannot consistently limit dialectical thought to the proletarian standpoint. Since he admits elsewhere, as part of the effort to comprehend Marx's thought as

the supposed inversion of Hegel's, that speculative idealism is dialectical, then either Hegel is a materialist or dialectical thought is bourgeois as well. Proletarians are unlikely to possess knowledge of the whole since their location in society means that they are in all probability deprived of the education and leisure needed to rise to this level of insight. But even if they had such knowledge, it would not follow that they would act upon it to bring about basic social changes. Hegel still thought of knowledge as self-realizing, as putting itself into practice, since reality could not resist a true idea.²⁹ But knowledge leads automatically to action only in Socratic dialogues and morality plays, not in ordinary life.

Lukács now draws the explicitly revolutionary consequences, or consequences for revolution, of the theory of epistemology he has been sketching here. In abandoning the view that knowledge is attained immediately, in adopting the idea of mediation as a necessary step, we open up a new and revolutionary form of knowledge that points to totality as the criterion. "On the other hand, the growing class consciousness that has been brought into being through the awareness of a common situation and common interests is by no means confined to the working class. The unique element in its situation is that its surpassing of immediacy represents an aspiration towards society in its totality regardless of whether this aspiration remains conscious or whether it remains unconscious for the moment."³⁰ In a word, mediation points to totality.

This inference follows since mediation points to its completion, which occurs only in the fully mediated totality. Lukács founds his claim for the possibility of revolutionary activity in the process-like nature of the modern industrial society. To adopt the concept of mediation is to transform the objective nature of the objects of action. The objects are seen at once to be part of an ongoing process, which can then be transformed. The unique character of capitalism is that all natural barriers are abolished and all relations

between human beings are converted into social relations. Since becoming is prior to being, he maintains that processes are prior to things, which in a sense derive from them.³¹

This anti-Cartesian rejection of a thing ontology in favor of processes is specifically anticipated by Hegel as well as process thinkers in general.³² Lukács draws a number of epistemological inferences from his process perspective.³³ First, to discover human being we need to start from the immediacy of the reified relations in order to penetrate beyond it. Second, since the reification is not only conceptual, it can only be abolished by changing the society in which it occurs. Third, the activity, or praxis, of social change cannot be divorced from the knowledge that renders it possible. Fourth, the process of consciousness that makes possible the knowledge leading to social change is lodged on the level of the proletariat. Fifth, the task of the proletariat is not only to become conscious, but also to translate this consciousness into social change.

This emphasis on proletarian class consciousness is an expansion of the Marxian view that the proletariat depends on philosophy. Lukács believes that to bring about an act of consciousness overthrows the objective form of its object.³⁴ Now this view of consciousness contradicts Marx's thesis on which Lukács relies throughout that states that consciousness is determined by social being and not conversely.³⁵ Lukács simply reproduces the contradiction in Marx's position between consciousness as determined by the social context, and hence not free to act, and to undetermined and, accordingly, free. Either consciousness is determined or it is not; it cannot be both without qualification. In practice, although Lukács appeals to the Marxian thesis to reject non-Marxist theory, he also rejects it. For in Lukács's theory of class consciousness, it is clear that consciousness, or revolutionary consciousness, determines social being and not conversely.

Lukács, who overlooks the basic tension in his argument at this

point, turns quickly to the practical role of class consciousness. The force of change liberated by class consciousness derives from the intrinsically irrational character of capitalism. This latent force, hidded in the law-like character of bourgeois rationalistic disciplines, is liberated as soon as we see that rationalistic laws fail to function at a certain point. The reified existence of the objects of the social process is dissolved when we understand that things are aspects of processes.

The perhaps surprising result is a form of the Heraclitean theory of flux, since so-called social facts are seen to be processes. For Lukács as for Heraclitus, and a wide variety of others who hold that being is merely a derivative category (e.g., Bergson, William James, Alfred North Whitehead, Heidegger, etc.) the historical process is primary and everything else is based upon it.³⁶ Pursued to its logical end, the denial that the relations that compose modern industrial society are eternal categories of being leads to a dissolution of fixity in historical flux. Lukács is aware of the consequences of his view for an understanding of reality. "This throws an entirely new light on the problem of reality. If, in Hegel's terms, Becoming now appears as the truth of Being, and process as the truth about things, then this means that the *developing tendencies of history constitute a higher reality than the empirical facts.*"³⁷

Lukács now restates his claim in Hegelian terms. For Hegel, Becoming is a higher, but derivative, category that presupposes Being for its intelligibility. We recall that in both versions of the *Logic*, namely the so-called *Lesser Logic* in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* and the so-called *Greater Logic* or *Science of Logic*, the analysis begins from Being before moving on to Non-Being and Becoming. Following Hegel, Lukács maintains that Becoming is primary, not secondary with regard to Being. In Lukács's social interpretation of becoming, becoming is a process driven forward by intrinsically antagonistic principles, such as the

rule of the past over the present and the rule of capital over labor. The consideration of reality in terms of facts has historically enabled human being to subject nature to its will and as a result through the course of human history to bring about social development. But the related concealment of the "process-nature" of social reality has served to obscure the socio-historical background and to render humans incapable of social change. According to Lukács, every phenomenon must be recognized as a process in order to understand that facts consist of processes comprehended in a reified manner.³⁸

Once again, it is important to distinguish between Lukács's epistemological claim and his use of it. Since the process form of ontology occurs widely in non-Marxist thinkers, it is not in itself a standard for differentiating between Marxism and non-Marxism. His appeal to this approach is a form of Protagoreanism in which, in Lukács's felicitous phrase, human being is the measure of all societal things.³⁹ Marx's dissolution of commodities, or fetishized objects, into reified relations allows us to understand all of social reality as a series of processes between human beings, that is, as processes of which human beings are at least potentially the masters. Like Marx, Lukács speaks of the human being in the plural, on the level of the class. What separates Lukács from Protagoras is his Marxist conviction that the individual is not the measure of all things, since only the class can relate to reality in a revolutionary way.

In the context of the wider discussion, Lukács's application of the process perspective to a theory of history is intended as a replacement for the classical German theory he earlier rejected. If it is understood as essentially a human product, inexplicable either through transcendental powers or transcendental values, history loses its uncognizable character. From the vantage point of the explanation of history as the result of the dialectically interrelated actions of human beings in the social context, Lukács rejects non-

dialectical attempts to grasp history in terms of human being, as well as the Hegelian concept of the absolute, which he regards as a mere failure to understand the historical process and mere relativism.

Obviously, history is only cognizable as a result of human action if human actions themselves are cognizable. The advantage of the Marxian vantage point is that from it one can propose a general theory of human action. The perspective Lukács develops here on the basis of Marx's thought has obvious roots and in Vico and the Kantian tradition. There is a clear epistemological link between Vico's rejection of the Cartesian effort to know an independent object in favor of the restriction of knowledge to history as a human product, the Kantian Copernican Revolution, and Lukács's perspective here.

If this is the case, then it undermines Lukács's consistent aim throughout this essay to insist on the difference in kind between Marxism and classical German thought. In a sense, he is correct to stress the differences since the abstract approach to knowledge that arises in Kant only gradually takes on a historical cast typical of Marx's thought. The resultant link between knowledge and history does not discover, but only recovers Vico's original insight. It follows, as Lukács sees, that the distinction between Marx's position and classical German philosophy—despite his insistence on the Marxist dogma that Marx breaks with German idealism—is merely a matter of degree. There are many differences between Marx, Vico, and German idealism. But Marx's extension of the classical German approach to knowledge through a philosophical anthropology is in effect a form of Vico's view that we can know only history since we have made it.⁴⁰

The third main part of the reification essay, the topic of this chapter, is divided into six sections. In the last section of his essay Lukács summarizes his argument, which he usefully relates to Hegel's view of epistemology and Engels's theory of reflection.

Universal reification, which is the reality of capitalism, can be disrupted only through constant efforts to become aware of the meaning of contradictions for total social development. "Reification is, then, the necessary, immediate reality of every person living in capitalist society. It can be overcome only by *constant and constantly renewed efforts to disrupt the reified structure of existence by concretely relating to the concretely manifested contradictions of the total development, by becoming conscious of the immanent meanings of these contradictions for total development.*"⁴¹

This statement merely recalls Lukács's claim throughout this essay that we can only escape the restrictions imposed by modern industrial society through insight into its structure. On this basis, he now makes four points in rapid succession. First, the structure of reification can be disrupted by becoming conscious of it. For this reason, Lukács maintains that the proletariat will become the identical subject-object of history whose practice will change reality. "Only when the consciousness of the proletariat is able to point out the road along which the dialectics of history is objectively impelled, but which it cannot travel unaided, will the consciousness of the proletariat awaken to a consciousness of the process, and only then will the proletariat become the identical subject-object of history whose praxis will change reality."⁴²

Lukács immediately qualifies this claim in two ways. On the one hand, the objective course of history, by inference a course that is in some sense already there, is facilitated by our consciousness of it; in the link between theory and action the Hegelian problem of the unity of subjectivity and objectivity is resolved. This is a form of the standard claim, at least as old as Plato, that ideas guide our actions and precede their realization.⁴³ Through his denial, on the other hand, that the consciousness of the proletariat can, to employ Lukács's terms, travel this road unaided, he endorses the Leninist view of the party as the vanguard of the revolution, as

well as Marx's view, on which it is based, that the intellectuals are the brain and the proletariat is the heart of the revolution.⁴³ Despite his emphasis on practice, Lukács stresses the preponderant role of the intellectual.

Second, he insists that Marxism is based on the methodological concern with totality,⁴⁴ but revolutionary change does not require knowledge of totality. "Inseparable from this is the fact that the relation to totality does not need to become explicit, the plenitude of the totality does not need to be consciously integrated into the motives and objects of action."⁴⁵ In denying that one needs, in fact, to know totality, Lukács parries in advance the obvious Kantian objection that as the totality stands outside the empirical process it cannot be given in experience and hence can never be known. If it is not necessary to know the whole, but merely to possess a holistic orientation, then by inference the difference between Marxism and other forms of theory lies merely in a point of view.

Third, he proposes a holistic view of truth according to which an action is right or wrong in relation to its function in the total process. "Hence when judging whether an action is right or wrong it is essential to relate it to its function in the total process."⁴⁷ His aim is to combine the pragmatic side of Marx's thought with an insistence on objectivity consistent with his rejection of idealism. He is correct to point to the pragmatic character of Marx's view, apparent, for instance, in the notion that truth cannot be demonstrated on a theoretical plane, only in practice.⁴⁸ But it is problematic to insist on an objective truth of history, independent of our subjective beliefs, in terms of which actions can be judged. It is relevant to note that it is this same view of objective historical truth that functioned in the infamous Moscow trials as the basis for the condemnation of numerous old Bolsheviks, for example Nikolai I. Bucharin, as subjectively innocent but objectively guilty.⁴⁹

Fourth, he stresses that correct consciousness changes its objects and itself. "The eminently practical nature of this consciousness is to be seen in that an adequate, correct consciousness means a change in its own objects, and in the first instance, in itself."⁵⁰ This is a succinct, accurate statement of Hegel's well-known phenomenological view of experience.⁵¹ When the proletariat knows social reality as it is, that reality changes and the proletariat, as a consequence, also changes. This is another form of Lukács's familiar claim that the proletarian standpoint functions theoretically to solve the problems of classical German philosophy and practically to change from capitalism to another, better form of society.

The discussion in the last section of Lukács's paper until this point is repetition on a high plane, but repetition nonetheless. There is a remarkable shift in his view in his renewed effort, at the close of his discussion, to connect his theory of reification with the problems of classical German philosophy. When class consciousness emerges, and we see through the vestiges of reification, we resolve the problem of the thing-in-itself. "This insight alone puts us in a position to see through the last vestiges of the reification of consciousness and its intellectual form, the problem of the thing-in-itself."⁵²

The change lies in the proper attitude toward the supposedly central problem of classical German thought. Lukács here abandons his quasi-Hegelian effort to depict the post-Kantian tradition as an ongoing effort to resolve Kant's difficulty. The contribution of Marx's change in methodology does not lie in a further contribution that completes the discussion of the Kantian problem; it rather lies in the capacity to see through the problem so to speak, in sum to grasp it as a difficulty linked to the pre-Marxist, classical philosophical perspective.

The very idea that one could see through the problems of classical German philosophy by linking them to a methodological error betrays an impatience with the intractable nature of the philo-

sophical debate, which cannot be brought to a close. A similar impatience is apparent in remarks concerning the theory of reflection. Here he goes beyond his earlier objection to Engels's reading of Kant in a rejection of the heart to Engels's Marxism. In the theory of reflection we find the theoretical embodiment of the duality intractable to reified consciousness, which is insoluble from the bourgeois perspective.³³ Lukács approvingly refers to Rickert's view that a form of materialism that argues that thought is deduced from material reality is only an inverted form of Platonism and equally mythological.³⁴

This constitutes a rejection of the mechanistic Engelsian view of Marxism, which is dialectical in name only. Not only is Engels's approach incorrect; by implication its incorrectness is a function of the distortion of thought by its relation to advanced industrial society. But Lukács does not reject the idea of reflection theory in general, which must only be reformulated in a new, adequate, appropriately dialectical manner. In place of the reflection theory, Lukács suggests what sounds like a dialectical form of Spinozism, with speculative idealism the other great modern proponent conception of totality: "Thus thought and existence are not identical in the sense that they 'correspond' to each other, or 'reflect' each other, that they 'run parallel' to each other, or 'coincide' with each other [all expressions that conceal a rigid duality]. Their identity is that they are aspects of one and the same real historical and dialectical process. What is 'reflected' in the consciousness of the proletariat is the new positive reality arising out of the dialectical contradictions of capitalism. And this is by no means the invention of the proletariat, nor was it 'created' out of the void. It is rather the inevitable consequence of the process in its totality; one which changed from being an abstract possibility to a concrete reality only after it had become part of the consciousness of the proletariat and had been made practical by it."³⁵

In its classical form, reflection theory is no less mythological

than Platonic dualism since it fails to explain specific problems.⁵⁶ The solution, then, is not to reflect reflection theory but to reformulate it in another, better manner. Lukács is less timid, and more innovative with respect to the old categories of ontology, which now must be rejected in favor of a process view of reality, in which processes are prior to so-called facts. Since a dialectical interpretation fails to show how thought can know being, Lukács's move is to point to Marx's substitution of praxis (practice) for theory. "The solution proposed by Marx in these Theses on Feuerbach is to transform philosophy into praxis."⁵⁷ But to decide theoretical questions on a practical basis is not to transform philosophy into practice; it is rather to propose a theory of practice in a practical reinterpretation of philosophy. Further, the appeal to practice as the decisive realm leaves open the question of objective truth. To construe practice as theory of becoming may help to overcome the sterile duality of thought and being, but it casts no light at all on the nature of knowledge.

Lukács ends his great essay with a series of remarks on the role and conditions of proletarian class consciousness. He repeats his familiar view that proletarian consciousness reflects the new positive reality arising out of the contradictions of capitalism, which this consciousness allegedly transforms. In an oblique rejection of any idea of reformism in favor of revolutionary change, he again maintains that a transformation of society can only come about through Marxism. And he further criticizes Engels by inference in a comment that we must not confuse the dialectic of nature with that of society.

The essay concludes with a singular remark: "Any transformation can only come about as the product of the—free—action of the proletariat itself."⁵⁸ This remark, intended to sum up his view instead reveals its contradictory nature. His argument in the discussion can be reconstructed as follows. (1) Kant's position turns on the unsolved problem of the thing-in-itself. (2) This problem is

central to all of classical German philosophy. (3) In virtue of its relation to the surrounding social context, classical German thought cannot solve the problem of the thing-in-itself. (4) This problem is resolved by Marxism. The solution to the unsolved problem of the thing-in-itself proposed by Marxism is due either to (a) Marx's concept of commodity-analysis, in which case Marxism as political economy substitutes science for philosophy; or (b) a concept of totality, in effect a rehabilitation of a traditional philosophical category (for instance, Aristotle, Spinoza, Hegel) in a new, satisfactory formulation, in which case Marxism offers a philosophical resolution for a philosophical problem; or (c) a substitution of praxis (practice) for philosophy, whose problems are simply dissolved.

If this reconstruction is correct, it is obvious that Lukács's analysis is composed of incompatible elements. It is one thing to resolve a philosophical problem philosophically, through a philosophical insight; it is quite another thing to transpose it to the plane of science, where it is supposedly amenable to an approach drawn from political economy; and it is still another thing to "dissolve" it in effect through an appeal to practice, which is neither philosophy nor science. These strategies cannot be reduced to one another since there is an irreconcilable difference between philosophy, science, and practice. The successive approaches to the problem of classical German philosophy from three incompatible perspectives presuppose three incompatible conceptions of Marxism as philosophy, science, or neither philosophy nor science respectively.

The disparate character of Lukács's argument is partly concealed by his constant emphasis on features common to the various formulations of the argument, including the persistence of a common problem from Kant to Marx and Marxism, the methodological difference between Marxism and classical German philosophy, the link between German thought and the social context,

the reification due to modern industrial society, and the revolutionary potential of class consciousness. It has already been pointed out in the discussion that each of these features is controversial. The central theme of the discussion, the role of class consciousness, is perhaps almost its most doubtful aspect. The analysis attributes three qualities to class consciousness: (1) understood theoretically, it resolves the storied problem of the thing-in-itself through the standpoint of the proletariat; (2) understood practically, the same standpoint leads to revolutionary action; (3) it is reified as a result of the relation to modern industrial society.

The most insightful aspect of class consciousness, its claimed reification in capitalism, is also the most difficult to maintain. It is implausible that the proletarian perspective resolves the problem of the thing-in-itself. Other than his repeated affirmation, Lukács provides no argument to support this inference. The proletarian standpoint has on occasion led to revolutionary action, for instance in the refusal of Marxist political domination in eastern Europe. Following Marx, Lenin refused Luxemburg's view of spontaneous proletarian revolutionary activity on the grounds, solidly anchored in Marx's thought, that the proletariat needed to be led. Lukács's conception of reification is not optimally formulated. But it is correct to point to the specific effects produced by the extension of the economic factor throughout modern industrial society. If some version of contextualism is correct, then it cannot be plausibly denied that we are all influenced by the surrounding world. In that case, following Hegel, Marx's insistence on the significance of the industrial revolution is a point well taken.

Lukács's particular interpretation of class consciousness is unacceptable. If proletarian consciousness is the condition of free action, in effect he maintains that the condition of becoming free is that one is already free, in other words, that thought is not determined by being. This view is problematic for four reasons. To

begin with, if class consciousness is reified, hence constrained by its relation to the modern industrialized world, then it obviously cannot be free. It is inconsistent to maintain that class consciousness is both constrained and not constrained, determined and free in the same respect. Second, if class consciousness is not constrained, if there is no oppression worth noting, then there is no reason to long for a fundamental social change. Further, despite his defense of Marxist orthodoxy, even against Engels, Lukács in part defends an unorthodox form of Marxism. If, as he holds, class consciousness is free to determine being, then thought is not determined by being but being is determined by thought. Finally, class consciousness, invoked to overcome dualism, gives rise to a new dualism. In his interpretation, Kant's thing-in-itself allegedly provokes a duality between subject and object that remains unresolved in later German philosophy. Lukács appeals to class consciousness to demonstrate the identity of subject and object. But his view of class consciousness as both free and determined does not go beyond the level reached by the critical philosophy; it is merely another version of the Kantian distinction between phenomenal determinism and noumenal freedom. Since Kant is an idealist, despite his intentions, Lukács's Marxist effort to resolve the problems of classical German idealism through a turn to materialism nevertheless remains within the idealist sphere.

Hegel's Objective Idealism and Dialectical Materialism

THE THREE PRECEDING CHAPTERS have reviewed in some detail the central part of Lukács's brilliant but flawed argument for Marxism as the truth of classical German idealism in his initial, best-known Marxist work, *History and Class Consciousness*. His argument turns on a distinction between reason and irrationalism, or an intrinsically defective form of reason. Lukács's discussion combines insights drawn from Marx, Marxism, and German neo-Kantianism. In particular, it applies the neo-Kantian idea of the irrationalism of the object of knowledge as incompletely cognizable to classical German philosophy. The methodological flaw of the German philosophical tradition, which disqualifies it as a source of knowledge, is overcome by Marxist methodology in a Marxist theory of reason.

Lukács's argument follows rigorously from his initial claim that at this stage in the development of humankind all problems ultimately lead back to the riddle of commodity-structure and there is no solution that cannot be found in the solution of this riddle. The discussion has traced and criticized three stages in Lukács's analysis: his initial effort to show the absolute superiority of Marx's

commodity-analysis and the conception of totality over other forms of political economy; his demonstration of the intrinsic (methodological) inability of classical German philosophy to solve its problems; and his final attempt to show how the proletarian standpoint resolves these unresolved problems.

Philosophical arguments, including Lukacs's, habitually fall short of the mark. If they were wholly successful, if everyone were convinced, then the philosophical tradition would come to an end. But this prospect seems highly unlikely, especially in the wake of the widely acknowledged failure of Anglo-American philosophy, the current turn away from phenomenology, and the failure of such traditional perspectives as scholasticism to attract new adherents. For it is always possible to formulate a counter-argument from a different perspective, to advance another point of view.¹ The value of Lukács's profound, but unsuccessful attempt lies in its important contribution to Marxist theory—including concepts of reification, class consciousness, the effort to demonstrate the frequent Marxist claim of the superiority of Marx's theory over preceding thought, and so on—and in its immense influence on later Marxist discussion.

In the preface of the new edition (1967) of *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács retracted some of the more significant claims for his argument, including the very idea of an identical subject-object.² But he never abandoned his belief, basic to Marxism, in the intrinsic superiority of the angle of vision deriving from Marx's thought. No doubt because he was aware of difficulties in his analysis, in his writings after *History and Class Consciousness* he presented further but weaker versions of his argument. Even in its original version, the argument was difficult. Since, as Lukács correctly recognized, reification in the Marxist sense did not occur before the rise of modern capitalism, he was unable to argue against philosophy as such; he was obliged to restrict his claim for the superiority of Marxism to the modern form of philosophy, particularly German idealism.

In his writings after *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács further restricts his claims for Marxism. In its initial version, the argument for Marxism was presented through an argument against non-Marxism, in practice through the effort to make out the specific difference, the shift in perspective that distinguishes Marx's theory from classical German idealism. This procedure is typical of his later writings as well, in which he develops his Marxist viewpoint through comparative analysis of other perspectives counterposed to Marxism; through remarks on other forms of theory he typically works out his own claims for Marx and Marxism.

The later evolution of Lukács's thought is inseparable from his ongoing effort to differentiate Marxism from non-Marxism, to specify his claim for the particular nature of Marxist reason. This task connects the different stages of his Marxist phase. The inflections in his understanding of Marxism in an immense oeuvre composed over more than a half century during the long period from 1918 when he joined the Hungarian Communist Party, and his death in 1971 represent successive forms of his particular comprehension of Marxism as distinguished from other alternatives—in effect, different conceptions of a Marxist view of reason.

The discussion has so far considered "Reification and Class Consciousness," the brilliant central essay of *History and Class Consciousness*. In his later writing, we can distinguish three further versions of his argument for the superiority of Marxism over classical German philosophy, which we can correlate with particular works in his corpus: (1) the study of the relation of Marx and Hegel in terms of the problem of alienation, which he elaborates in *The Young Hegel*, (2) the demonstration of the roots of German political irrationalism in *Existentialism or Marxism?* and *The Destruction of Reason*, and (3) the effort to work out a new Marxist ontology in *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*. In different ways consistent with their specific focus, each of these texts constitutes a further stage in his development of a Marxist

conception of reason through its differentiation from a non-Marxist view, in practice through the ongoing effort to distinguish between Marx and classical German philosophy.

In writings after *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács only reinforces his pioneering Marxist emphases on Hegel. His relation to Marxism is consistently ambiguous. Although he constantly emphasizes his orthodoxy throughout his Marxist period, he rejects basic items of Marxist doctrine. For instance, in the great reification essay he characteristically rejects the Marxian conception of the determination of thought by social being. His relation to Hegel is equally ambiguous. He was already well acquainted with Hegel before his Marxist turn. Hegel is decisively present in his pre-Marxist aesthetic writings.

His continuing effort to come to grips with Hegel runs throughout his Marxist writings from beginning to end. His study of Hegel in his Marxist period is determined by his interest in Marxist orthodoxy. He is constantly concerned to understand Marx in terms of Hegel and Hegel in terms of Marx. In "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat," he approaches speculative idealism from two separate directions: dogmatically, in the traditional Marxist manner, as the author of an abstract, ideologically determined theory, which is the reverse of Marx's, a position that Marx set on its feet so to speak; and creatively, as a philosopher who developed the insight into totality decisive for correct knowledge of the social context. Even the dogmatic aspect of his Hegel interpretation was creative; his stress on the importance of Hegel's *Logic* for the constitution of Marx's thought fruitfully widened the discussion of Marx's position beyond the more usual hermeneutics of the well-known, but opaque passage in the second afterword to *Capital* where Marx suggests that his own position is the result of the inversion of Hegelian idealism.

In writings after the initial breakthrough to Marxism, Lukács continually strengthens his emphasis on Hegel as the key to an

understanding of Marx. After *History and Class Consciousness*, he deepens his analysis of Hegel at the same time as he narrows the focus of his approach. In the study of reification, he discovered this neglected concept in Marx's thought, but did not examine its importance for the relation between Marx and Hegel. Reification is necessarily a key theme in the reification essay. But it is likely that at the time he composed this text Lukács was unaware of its significance for the Marx-Hegel relation for two reasons. He had not yet read Marx's still unpublished "Paris Manuscripts," a text containing the only detailed account of alienation in Marx's corpus; and he was more familiar with Hegel's *Logic* than with the *Phenomenology of Mind* and the earlier Hegelian writings. In *The Young Hegel*, Lukács provides a detailed study of the Marx-Hegel relation centered on the theme of alienation.

Lukács's monograph on Hegel is important for several reasons. It is the first and, to the best of my knowledge, still the only full-length Marxist work on Hegel's thought. Also to the best of my knowledge, it is the first detailed study from any angle of vision of the relation of philosophy and economics in Hegel's position. Lukács tells us in the preface to the new edition (1954) that the book was completed in the late autumn of 1938 (while he was living in Moscow), but thoroughly revised for publication in 1947-48 when its appearance became possible after the war.³ This treatise, which was composed during the period of Stalin's rule in the Soviet Union, shows clear traces of Stalinist orthodoxy. Like Lukács's other writings from his Stalinist period, above all the studies of irrationalism⁴ and existentialism,⁵ it is marred by an unpleasant form of Marxist orthodoxy.

The type, even the degree, of Marxist orthodoxy in this and other writings from Lukács's overtly Stalinist period represents a significant change in approach. In his initial Marxist phase he presented himself as an orthodox Marxist although his view was in part unorthodox by any Marxist standard. At this point, he

claimed to defend Marxist orthodoxy, if necessary, even against Engels. In fact, he silently rejected basic aspects of orthodox Marxism, such as Marx's thesis that thought is determined by being. Despite careful public claims to fidelity, he was careful to preserve a significant degree of intellectual independence in that work.

In terms of Kant's well-known distinction between the spirit and the letter,⁶ Lukács's initial form of Marxist orthodoxy is reminiscent of the concern within German idealism to remain true to the spirit, but not to the letter, of the view in question.⁷ His claim in *History and Class Consciousness* that Marxist orthodoxy consists in the adherence to Marxist method but not to any particular thesis, nor the restriction to the exegesis of any particular text, is an obvious effort to be faithful to the spirit of Marxism.⁸ This interpretation of Marxist orthodoxy made it possible for Lukács to criticize its letter, exemplified in his view in so-called vulgar, or unauthentic, Marxism, supposedly foreign to its spirit.

The covert intellectual independence, central to his early Marxism, is not an important aspect of the texts of his Stalinist period, including his monograph on Hegel. A different form of Marxist orthodoxy consisting in intellectual servility, a kind of *Stalinisme avant la lettre*, was adopted by Lukács as early as 1924, when he publicly renounced *History and Class Consciousness*. He later suggested that many of his *prises de position* were essentially tactical.⁹ It is, then, important to note the continued presence in these and other writings of a form of Marxist orthodoxy that seems now to require fidelity both to the spirit and the letter of Marxism. Like such other intellectuals as Heidegger and Paul de Man, for political reasons Lukács voluntarily placed his considerable intellectual gifts in the service of political tyranny.¹⁰ He not only failed to place a critical distance between himself and Stalinism, but he continued to justify its worst excesses even when there was no longer any political urgency to do so.¹¹

It is possible that even Lukács was not aware of the extent of his political obedience, the degree to which he accepted Stalin's view as an intellectual guide. The result is a typical ambiguity in which he proclaims his independence even as he slavishly follows the orthodox line. In his intellectual autobiography, written at the end of his life, he maintains inconsistently that Stalin decisively influenced his own Marxism,¹² but that he totally rejected Stalin's philosophical line.¹³ His servile orthodoxy is apparent even in the philosophical insight he generously attributes to Stalin well after the dictator's death—and after he had been denounced by Nikita Krushchev, in a period of open de-Stalinization—when Lukács personally had nothing to fear. He credits the Soviet dictator's fight against Plekhanovist orthodoxy in the 1930s with having opened his eyes to the fact that Marxism was not only a purely socio-economic theory but a universal philosophy. But this insight is already a basic theme in *History and Class Consciousness*, where he maintains that Marxism provides a philosophical resolution of unresolved philosophical problems through a fundamental methodological innovation.

Lukács regards his study of Hegel as politically unorthodox since he fails to reduce Hegel to a mere ideologist.¹⁴ But his Stalinism is abundantly evident even in the new edition of *The Young Hegel*, completed in January 1954, that is, after Stalin's death. Examples include: the abandonment of all criticism of Engels, whose insights are continually, even fulsomely praised;¹⁵ an exaggerated stress on Feuerbach, whom he controversially describes as the indispensable link between Hegel and Marx, and as a thinker on Hegel's level if the assertion, later echoed by Mészáros,¹⁶ that Lenin was cognizant of the content of the "Paris Manuscripts" although he did not read them;¹⁷ and the praise, not only of Marx and Engels, but of Lenin and even Stalin as great critics of Hegel.

In comparison, *The Young Hegel* is politically more orthodox than *History and Class Consciousness*. But as history of philoso-

phy, it improves on the earlier work. The improvement is in part due to Lukács's correction of some earlier errors, including the celebrated conflation of alienation and objectification under the heading of "reification," a conflation that is now attributed to Hegel.¹⁸ There is also a change in Lukács's approach to philosophy that enables him to take it more seriously. *History and Class Consciousness* offers a variation of the Marxist view of non-Marxism as ideology. Classical German thought is distorted by the reification present in advanced industrial society and the bourgeois interest in maintaining a privileged position. Marxism attains truth through its universal perspective, or interest in a society beyond classes. Lukács now abandons the Marxist reading of philosophy for a variant of Hegel's well-known view that a position is necessarily limited by the historical moment in which it occurs.¹⁹ He applies this idea to the interpretation of Hegel's thought, which he here regards as composed of philosophical and economic components.

In spite of his violent critique of idealism as bourgeois thought, it is no accident that Lukács's study of Hegel has been well received within the non-Marxist Hegel discussion.²⁰ His work is an example of the best kind of Hegel research: informed, patient, aware of conflicting points of view, and concerned to place Hegel in the historical context. Lukács here indicates a mastery of Hegel's early texts, their historical and conceptual background, and their prior discussion in the secondary literature. His inquiry falls naturally into four parts, corresponding to Hegel's successive residence in Berne, Frankfurt, and Jena, followed by a careful analysis of the break with Schelling and the structure of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

At this point, Lukács tempers his earlier reductive approach to philosophy as ideology in the expansion of his Marxist reading of Hegel's thought. In the introduction to *The Young Hegel* he proclaims his intention to study the history of the origins and devel-

opment of classical German philosophy, understood as an unsolved problem in Marxist history of philosophy.²¹ He further indicates four points that determine the entire discussion to follow. First, he argues that we have not even begun to work out a radical critique of the main bourgeois theories of the subject.²² A central thrust of the earlier discussion of reification is the intrinsic inadequacy of the bourgeois conception of subjectivity, for which he substitutes the notion of the proletariat as the identical subject-object of history. His attention here to non-Marxist ideas of the subject merely extends his earlier analysis. Second, he notes his intention to free himself from Hegel's influential, brilliantly original, but idealistically distorted interpretation of classical German philosophy.²³ In this way, he follows the concern of many writers to provide a new, non-Hegelian reading of modern German thought.²⁴ The difference lies in his desire to work out a specifically Marxist "hermeneutics" of this period, that is, an interpretation that necessarily respects the fundamental claims of Marxist faith, such as the dogma that Marx's theory is the inversion of Hegel's.

Third, Lukács states that as an objective idealist Hegel "gets everything upside down" since he sees philosophy in terms of the autonomous movement of the concept.²⁵ He here publicly reaffirms his Marxist orthodoxy through an implicit reference to two well-known Marxian views: the idea that speculative idealism inverts the proper relation between concept and object, and the view that Marx's position is the reverse of Hegel's.

Fourth, he states that Engels has often shown that philosophers build on the problems left unsolved by their predecessors; but "as a dialectical materialist he [i.e., Engels—T.R.] also shows again and again that this purely philosophical analysis is peripheral to the real analysis and that the historian of philosophy must make the descent to the real, underlying objective foundations of the movement of philosophy."²⁶ His public statement of confidence in

Engels is significant in view of his earlier critique of the founder of Marxism. His public realignment on Engels's line points toward a seamless web between the views of Marx, Engels, the first Marxist, Lenin, the first political head of Marxism, and Stalin, then the reigning political heir to Marx and Marxism. He supplements his new emphasis on Engels's dialectical materialism with a rejection of the mechanistic Marxism of the Second International. He further stresses the importance of Lenin's philosophical writings and the newly published works of Marx and Engels in order to establish what he calls "a consistent Marxist-Leninist line."

The philosophical significance of this statement is Lukács's adoption of the Marxist line that philosophical debates can be resolved on an extraphilosophic plane, in the supposed insight into their underlying foundations. There is a clear inference that only politically orthodox Marxism-Leninism is capable of a more than superficial analysis of social reality. This is merely the counterpart of his claim in *History and Class Consciousness* that philosophy, or so-called pure philosophy, cannot grasp more than a superficial and ultimately false appearance of reality, for the roots of philosophical problems lie in the economic dimension of social reality. Lukács earlier in part accepted, but also resisted, the Marxist approach to philosophy as necessarily false through his emphasis on such philosophical categories as totality. But here his resistance has faded before the total embrace of Marxist orthodoxy.

To comprehend the philosophical importance of his study of Hegel, we need to distinguish between his politically motivated effort to embrace orthodox Marxism and his philosophical analysis of Hegel's thought from a Marxist perspective. Lukács stresses the sense in which his Marxist analysis of Hegel is meant to be exemplary for a Marxist history of philosophy. Philosophically his approach to Hegel is both contextualist and reductive. It includes a concern to understand speculative idealism in its social

and political context. It further includes a concern to reduce speculative idealism to that context. The difference between these incompatible approaches to philosophical interpretation is of primordial importance. The study of a philosophical position against its particular historical background, as Hegel reminds us, is often crucial.²⁷ A contextualist form of interpretation should not be conflated with the more extreme effort, inconsistent with it, to "reduce" a theory to its context, as exemplified in certain forms of Marxism and psychoanalysis.

To explain the role of philosophy in Marxist terms, we need to consider it in the concrete social context. Lukács believes that the basic insights of classical German philosophy reflect the political events of the age, in particular the French Revolution. He sees as his task to unravel the complex relation of German philosophy to the political events of the period. Hegel's importance is threefold: he provided the most impressive German assessment of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic period; he is the only German thinker to make a serious attempt to come to grips with the industrial revolution in England; and he is "the only man to have forged a link between the problems of classical English economics and those of philosophy and dialectics."²⁸

Lukács here modifies his earlier view of the relation between the economics, philosophy, and dialectic in Marxism. In *History and Class Consciousness*, he officially located the break between classical German philosophy and Marxism in Marx's turn to political economy. This reading of the relation between Marx and his German idealist colleagues unfairly neglected their attention to economics. Among the German idealists Fichte²⁹ and above all Hegel were deeply interested in political economy. Lukács now revises his earlier view in order to recognize the extent to which Hegel was aware of contemporary political economy.³⁰ As Hegel's example demonstrates, the difference between classical German philosophy and Marxism cannot lie in the concern with economics as

such; rather, it can only lie in the way in which each understands this domain.

This revised view of the difference between idealism and materialism allows Lukács a greater flexibility to acknowledge Hegel's achievement. His main purpose is to explore the role of economics in Hegel's thought. His specific aim is to explore Hegel's early development from the perspective of Marx's remark in the "Paris Manuscripts" (1844): "The greatness of Hegel's *Phenomenology* is then . . . that Hegel views the self-creation of man as a process . . . and therefore that he grasps the true nature of *labour* and understands objective man, true, because real man as the product of *his own labour*."³¹ He understands this statement, which he takes as the cornerstone of his own discussion, to mean that the "Hegelian philosophy forms an analogue of English classical economics."³²

Lukács's concern to recognize Hegel's achievement is combined with his desire to maintain the distinction between idealism and materialism, which he now redefines. Idealism always and necessarily falls short of the truth. Despite his brilliant insight, Hegel's position finally exhibits only an idealist dialectic and an idealist interpretation. In calling attention to the intrinsic limitations of the Hegelian interpretation, Lukács intends not only to contribute to the proper understanding of Hegel's thought but also to establish a "methodological perspective in the history of philosophy," a way to utilize the inner connections of economics and philosophy to provide a distinctively Marxist interpretation of the history of philosophy. His purpose is to correct the supposed idealist distortion emanating from Hegel and further elaborated by later thinkers.

In acknowledging that non-Marxists, such as Hegel, are concerned with political economy, Lukács bends but does not break the structure of his understanding of the relation of Marxism to classical German philosophy. This revision is significant since it

enables Lukács to take Hegel's position more seriously than before, to acknowledge its virtues in detail even as he maintains his view of its intrinsic limits. The result is a comparatively richer, in fact, rich reading of the Hegelian theory. This new reading demonstrates insight into the nature and development of Hegel's position even as it maintains the strict Marxist perspective that it is unable to overcome the limitations following from its idealistic perspective. Lukács now carefully locates this latter claim in the classical texts, in assertions that the birth of dialectical materialism as an epistemology lies in Engels's discovery of the dialectic of economic life,³³ and that Marx's "Paris Manuscripts" provide analysis of both classical economics and the economic basis of Hegel's *Phenomenology*.³⁴

In *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács maintains that Marxism replaces the mythological view of the historical subject with a discovery of the real factors of historical development, the real subject-object of history. In the study of Hegel, he extends, or supplements, his earlier argument by specifying the way in which Marx's theory, said to arise out of Hegel's, breaks with it. As in his small study of the development of Marx's thought,³⁵ the account of the relation of dialectic and economics in the thought of the young Hegel is organized chronologically and, within the space provided by the chronological orientation, in systematic fashion. For instance, positivity (*Positivität*) is discussed in two chapters as part of the account of Hegel's early republican phase in Berne³⁶ and again in the section concerning the beginning of the dialectical method in Frankfurt.³⁷ Hegel's views of economics are analyzed in the sections on the Frankfurt and the later Jena periods.

The study of Hegel, like all the works from his Marxist period, is a *livre à thèse*; Lukács never loses sight of his goal of demonstrating the superiority of materialism over idealism. But the purview and the interest of the book are wider than this minimal

claim would suggest. Its general interest derives from the fact that Lukács constantly exceeds the limits of his announced purpose in order to consider a wide variety of issues. These include standard themes for the development of Hegel's thought, such as early, unpublished texts, as well as selected special topics, such as positivity, economics, and alienation.

That Lukács constantly goes beyond the stated limits of his own study is due to his divided allegiance to both Hegel and Marx. As a Marxist he consistently maintains the superiority of Marx's view. But there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his deep, constant, and knowledgeable admiration for Hegel, already present in his pre-Marxist writings, and now manifest in his description of the author of speculative idealism as Germany's greatest philosophical genius.³⁸ This divided allegiance results in the odd situation in which Lukács constantly insists on Hegel's superiority over other philosophers, but also on his inferiority with respect to Marx. Speculative idealism surpasses subjective idealism;³⁹ but it finally ends in an "idealist chiaroscuro," that is, the mystical or even mythological element intrinsic to idealism.⁴⁰

An example of the wider interest of Lukács's study of Hegel is provided by his treatment of the theme of religion. Marx was not greatly interested in this topic and mentions it only rarely after his initial texts. Marxism has often taken a rather different attitude. The militantly antireligious attitude of many Marxists is reflected in a frequently insensitive, reductionistic approach to religion.⁴¹ Lukács's treatment of Hegel's view of this domain, important for an understanding of his position, is judicious and fair. It is especially so by comparison with commentators who strive to draw Hegel wholly toward or wholly away from religion. He rejects attempts, for instance by T. L. Häring and G. Lasson, no doubt influenced by Hegel's proud claim to be a Lutheran,⁴² to assimilate speculative idealism to Protestantism.⁴³

According to Lukács, Hegel's initially critical attitude toward

religion in Berne was replaced by a favorable attitude in Frankfurt that then became ambiguous in Jena. He quotes Heine's well-known remark on actuality and rationality, whose authenticity has recently been confirmed,⁴⁴ in order to suggest that contemporary radical intellectuals regarded Hegel as at least a progressive thinker. Hegel remained ambiguous on the issue of religion because he was unwilling to concede that otherworldliness is its essence. This suggestion is consistent with Hegel's later reluctance to seek a social solution outside contemporary society, as Lukács notes, after he had ceased to believe in the possible reconstitution of the Greek social context.

In view of his Marxism, Lukács's sensitive discussion of the question of religion in Hegel's thought is more surprising than his concern to establish the superiority of materialism over idealism. In *History and Class Consciousness* he maintained that the reification due to the rise of capitalism is a central category in Marx's position, but he located the difference between classical German idealism, including Hegel and Marx, in a basic methodological difference. The intervening publication of Marx's "Paris Manuscripts" allowed Lukács to see that alienation, a deeper form of his own conception of reification, is central to the Marxian theory.⁴⁵ He now argues that the difference between Marx's and Hegel's views, and by extension between materialism and idealism, lies in the correct understanding of alienation.

He bases his demonstration on a chronological analysis of the development of Hegel's thought from the earliest extant manuscripts up to and including the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The book provides a series of specific analyses that come together in the final chapter, significantly entitled "Externalization" (*Entäusserung*) as the central philosophical concept of the *Phenomenology of Mind* (Jena, 1803-1807).

Lukács maintains that Hegel's concern with alienation, and hence with economics, arises out of an earlier interest in positivity.

His initial concern with positivity undergoes a series of transformations in subsequent writings before disappearing. But the later absence of the concept of positivity does not lead to a disappearance of its problem, namely the dialectical relation of human practice in the social context to the products of work.⁴⁶ He discerns in Hegel's writings the gradual emergence of the concept of externalization which later plays a central role in the *Phenomenology*. For Lukács, Hegel's view of externalization represents a major advance on earlier views, particularly those of Kant, Fichte, and, to a lesser extent, Schelling. But Hegel falls short of an adequate comprehension of externalization because of his idealist perspective. For that reason, Marx's critique of the *Phenomenology* is a key document in the transition from idealism, with its intrinsic limits, to the correct world view, or dialectical materialism.

Lukács's study of the chronological development of Hegel's thought casts considerable light on Hegel's knowledge of political economy and on related concepts in his system. His effort to relate Hegel's comprehension of the concept of positivity⁴⁷ to the genesis of the Hegelian system, in particular to the study and gradual integration of insights borrowed from contemporary political economy, is interesting.⁴⁸ Hegel was increasingly concerned with the real forces that form modern society. It is correct that in the *Phenomenology* the concept of positivity is at least partly replaced by the idea of externalization.⁴⁹ Hegel initially used this term to designate an institution, or complex of ideas, standing in opposition to subjectivity, to human practice.

In order to differentiate Marx from Hegel, he pays particular attention to their respective views on "externalization." To the best of my knowledge, no one since Lukács has provided a more adequate analysis of the concept of externalization in Hegel's thought, particularly in the *Phenomenology*. We must acknowledge Lukács's pioneering role in calling attention to that side of Hegel's position. But in part because of his dependence on Marx,

Lukács not only calls attention to but also distorts Hegel's idea of this concept.

In Hegel's thought, "externalization" in general is intended to point to "the dialectical relation of the praxis of man in society to the objects he has brought forth [*zu ihren von ihr selbst geschaffenen Objekten*]." ⁵⁰ Lukács distinguishes three senses of externalization in the *Phenomenology*:⁵¹ (1) the complex subject-object relation bound up with work and all human activity in the social context; (2) the specifically capitalist form of "externalization," what Marx later called "fetishism"; and (3) the broad extension of the concept as synonymous with "thinghood" or objectivity. Lukács finds the root of Hegel's view of society as objective spirit and a view of history that surpasses the efforts of previous idealists in his discussion of work and its consequences. He believes Hegel's insufficient grounding in economic theory is manifest in a constant conflation of the first form of externalization with externalization in general; for Hegel supposedly conflates capitalism with the social context as such. In the third form of "externalization" as synonymous with "thinghood" or "objectivity" Lukács detects a moment of objectivity in the journey of the identical subject-object back into itself.

His appeal to "externalization" to demonstrate Marx's advance beyond Hegel presupposes that both thinkers employ this term in the same, or similar, fashion. But if they employ this word in relevantly different ways, with different senses, then their respective views are incomparable. Now Lukács himself calls attention to basically different designations of the same term in his complaint that in *History and Class Consciousness* his conflation of alienation and objectification—elements that Marx differentiates—is due to Hegel.

In fact, not only the designations of the terms, but the basic thrust of the positions in which they are embedded are dissimilar. Marx was mainly concerned to understand society in terms of hu-

man activity and objects produced by human activity, especially work. His aim was to comprehend the real possibilities for the transition from a type of society in which people are alienated for reasons of profit to another type of society in which each of us will be able freely to develop as individuals. But there is no reason to hold that this is precisely, or even approximately, at the center of Hegel's interest.

The dissimilarity in the basic projects of Marx and Hegel is visible in their respective concerns with political economy. Marx certainly shares Hegel's interest in the development of the idea of freedom. But Hegel does not share Marx's concern to understand the real conditions for the extension of freedom from a mainly economic vantage point as a function of the long-term prospects and eventual supersession of modern capitalism. If we grant Lukács's strictly economic claims about Marx's superior knowledge of political economy it does not follow that Marx's position is philosophically in advance of Hegel's. Marx was unquestionably more versed than Hegel in political economy. It is correct, as Lukács maintains, that Hegel never transcends the perspective of non-Marxist, so-called bourgeois political economy, particularly the limits of Adam Smith's thought,³² and that he failed to grasp the importance of class antagonisms.³³ Hegel's corpus has no equivalent, or even an approximate equivalent, for Marx's study of the theory of surplus value. But this point only becomes significant for the comparison between the two positions if it can be shown that both were concerned with a problem or problems they approach, or that can only be approached, from the economic perspective.

There is an obvious continuity in the reading of the Hegel-Marx relation here and in the reification essay. In *History and Class Consciousness* Lukács maintained that beginning with Kant all of classical German philosophy is concerned to solve a problem resolved by Marx. The scope of the argument here, which is limited

to Hegel and Marx, is narrower, but the supposition of a basic continuity between chronologically successive views is identical. Then as now Lukács presupposes the correctness of Marx's approach, as he comprehends it, and he supposes that his is Hegel's concern. Lukács believes that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel is concerned to translate the concepts of capitalism into the language of dialectic, but his true subject is the phenomenological deduction of commodity relations.⁵⁴ The latter point is a version of the earlier analysis of reification. It is only if Hegel and other thinkers since Marx in the classical German philosophical tradition are concerned with commodity-analysis that they fall short of Marx's theory. If capitalism were based on commodity relations, as Marx holds, and if Hegel were concerned to analyze its economic basis, this description would be accurate. But there is an important distinction between the analysis of the structural basis of modern industrial society, Marx's concern, and Hegel's rather different interest in the science of the phenomenology of experience and allied topics. Unlike Marx, Hegel is only tangentially interested in capitalism as such,⁵⁵ least of all the long-term economic prospects for this form of modern society.⁵⁶

The main component of Lukács's argument lies in his discussion of externalization in Hegel's system. He maintains that the terms "externalization" (*Entäusserung*) and "alienation" (*Entfremdung*) became central to Hegel's system in the course of the latter's effort to translate into philosophical concepts the result of his studies of history and economics.⁵⁷ It is clear that Hegel does utilize these terms; it is unclear that they become central to his system, and Lukács does not argue the point. He does not show, but simply assumes that—just as for Marx in the "Paris Manuscripts," and perhaps throughout his writings, so for Hegel in the *Phenomenology*—the terms associated with the phenomenon, problem, and concept of alienation are at the heart of his position.

Lukács intends his description of Hegel's concept of externaliza-

tion to be the highpoint of his study of the relation of dialectic and economics in Hegel's thought. But his account of Hegel's view of externalization is astonishingly brief, particularly so in view of its role in his argument, as well as misleading. Lukács habitually quotes extensively. But his brief attempt to characterize Hegel's concept of externalization offers only a single quotation from the *Phenomenology*. The failure to provide more textual evidence is perhaps not accidental, since it is difficult to find clear examples in the text of the distinctions Lukács attributes to Hegel. As an examination of the text will show, what Lukács identifies as the third kind of externalization is in fact its major, perhaps its only main form in this book.

In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel repeatedly refers to externalization in general in the analysis of different themes.⁵⁸ Isolated passages, or a phrase taken out of context, may suggest otherwise; but in this work Hegel is not specifically concerned with the kind of externalization that interests Marx, namely externalization resulting from productive activity or work within the productive process. Hegel only studies this form of externalization in his account of work in the *Philosophy of Right*.⁵⁹ It is possible that Marx is correct that Hegel fails fully to appreciate the negative side of work. But Marx is incorrect to identify Hegel's discussion of work as the main theme of the *Phenomenology*. Certainly, Lukács knew better. Even if he was bound to a rigid form of Marxist orthodoxy at this point in his career, he is wrong to follow Marx on this point.

Lukács utilizes his exposition of the discussion of externalization in the *Phenomenology* as the basis for his criticism of idealism. His criticism is an amplification and restatement of Marx's critique of Hegel in the "Paris Manuscripts."⁶⁰ This exposition is clearly insufficient for his present purposes. Lukács's study of Hegel is long⁶¹ and detailed. But his case for the superiority of Marx and Marxism over Hegel depends, or largely depends, on

his reading of the latter's view of externalization. For that reason, we are entitled to a fuller exposition than we are offered if we are not simply to assume the truth of Lukács's point, to take it on faith so to speak. In place of a full analysis, which would examine in detail Hegel's concept, we are in effect asked to accept Lukács's suggested reading as correct without the necessary textual demonstration. Significantly, Lukács devotes fewer than ten pages to describing the way in which the themes he has followed in detail in Hegel's prior writings culminate in the *Phenomenology*, but he accords more than twenty pages to a restatement and defense of Marx's critique of Hegel's position.

If we acknowledge the differences between the positions of Marx and Hegel, then Lukács is correct to suggest that Marx's critical discussion of Hegel's *Phenomenology* at the end of the "Paris Manuscripts" constitutes a basic step in the transition to his own position. Yet this minimal result is not enough for Lukács's purpose since it fails to demonstrate the veracity of Marx's viewpoint. Lukács does not show that Hegel has been misunderstood, even by his non-Marxist students. Rather, Lukács shows that Hegel has been only incompletely understood since important aspects of Hegel's position, such as his concepts of externalization and his effort to integrate political economy into his thought, have been overlooked. More generally, Lukács does not demonstrate that when we understand the real Hegel we see that the objections raised by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin were correct.⁶²

In this book, Lukács makes an important contribution to our knowledge of Hegel; but his argument for the superiority of materialism over idealism fails since it is not supported by the texts. We can concede Lukács's assertion that Marx had a better knowledge of economics and economic reality than Hegel without accepting his conclusion that materialism surpasses idealism. Lukács here repeats his belief, familiar from the essay on reification, that idealism ends in mystification, despite its undeniable achieve-

ments, because of the effect of capitalism on classical German philosophy. He claims that Marx showed that Hegel's "uncritical idealism" and "uncritical positivism" follow necessarily from his social existence,⁶ and he further claims that the contradictions of bourgeois society reach their highest point in Hegel's dialectic.⁶ But since Lukács insists on the critical nature of Hegelian idealism throughout this book, it is at least odd, and perhaps inconsistent, for him now to accuse Hegel of being uncritical in any simple sense and perhaps uncritical at all. The only way we can understand this complaint is if we remember that Lukács accepts the obligation of Marxist orthodoxy.

The other, deeper issue, central to Lukács's belief in the superiority of materialism over idealism, is his conviction that Hegel's view is distorted by the social context in which it arises. To grant that Marx's opposition of the real facts of existence to the mystified premises of Hegelian idealism⁶ shows that Hegel is mistaken does not, and cannot, yield the further conclusion that Hegel's mistake derives from the relation of his position to the social context. That conclusion would only follow if it could be shown that and how Hegel's position is distorted by the social surroundings in which it takes form, the way in which capitalism leads Hegel astray. Since Lukács merely asserts but fails to demonstrate his claim, it does not follow that idealism is inferior to materialism. In sum, Lukács helpfully analyzes the relation of economics and dialectic in Hegel's thought, but he does not show that Hegel's idealist position ends in a mysticism that is overcome in Marx's materialism.

Philosophical and Political Irrationalism

THERE IS AN OBVIOUS CONTINUITY between *History and Class Consciousness* and *The Young Hegel*. Lukács's distinction between reason and unreason, or irrationality, describes his comprehension of the difference between Marxism and its philosophical rivals. In both instances classical German philosophy is presented as incapable of knowing an object, which, like the thing-in-itself, is uncognizable by a form of reason vitiated by its methodological limitations and relation to advanced industrial society. The nature of the contemporary social world is grasped only from the proletarian standpoint of the proletariat, that is, from within Marxism, the only theory rationally attuned to its object. In his earlier work, the effort of classical German philosophy to comprehend the subject-object relation ends in Hegel's supposedly mythological idea of the absolute; but Marxism discovers the proletariat as the identical subject-object of history. In his later study, Hegel's analysis of the relation of economics and philosophy is limited by his idealistic perspective, as witness his view of alienation. Marx transcends the idealistic perspective in a theory of alienation that lays bare the structure of modern capitalism.

The study of Hegel maintains the Kantian approach to Marxism from an epistemological angle. The distinction between Marxism and other forms of thought concerns the capacity for knowledge. Marxism reaches knowledge in the full sense through a grasp of the essence, the thing-in-itself, whereas non-Marxism is restricted to the phenomenal level only. Classical German philosophy, including Hegel's, remains on the level of mere positivity because of the defects of a form of reason concerned only with false appearance. Marxism surpasses previous theories in its solution of the epistemological problem.

Lukács's epistemological approach to Marxism is as interesting as it is rare. It is more frequent to proclaim that Marxism provides the key to the liberation of human being. But after the collapse of official Marxism in Eastern Europe, it is difficult to maintain this political view. Claims for Marxism's philosophical contribution are more often stated than argued in detail. The considerable merit of Lukács's early Marxist writings, including his Hegel monograph, is to provide a detailed argument for the Marxist contribution to the theory of knowledge based on thorough knowledge of the classical German philosophical tradition.

The Young Hegel belongs to the early phase of Lukács's Stalinist period. In writings from his later Stalinist phase he continues to develop his view of the irrationality of non-Marxist philosophy. But his understanding of irrationality changes to include a political component mainly absent in previous writings. Lukács now emphasizes the epistemological and political aspects of the difference between Marxism and non-Marxism. The intrinsic weakness of non-Marxism is visible in its vain attempts to find a third way between idealism and materialism, in effect to escape from the limitations of the watershed problem described for orthodox Marxism by Engels, and in the contribution of certain forms of German thought to the rise of Nazism.

The new, broader comprehension of irrationality as both epis-

temological and political builds on his reading of classical German thought in previous writings. A political element was already implicitly present in his initial Marxist view, for instance in his attention to the distinction between a fully rational conception of subjectivity and his reading of Hegel's view of the subject as mythical, or in the tension he detects in classical German thought between the recognition of facticity and the drive toward total system. Both of these examples point beyond what he views as the evident failure of non-Marxism to an incapacity to free thought from its existential roots in order to grasp its surroundings. Since an understanding of the social context is a prerequisite to its transformation, Lukács's critique of the epistemological deficiency classical German philosophy, including speculative idealism, refers as well to its incapacity to initiate political change.

Lukács's discussion of political irrationalism is mainly an expansion of his lengthy effort to differentiate between subjective and objective forms of idealism. In his history of philosophy, Hegel presents a teleological interpretation of the philosophical tradition as composed of successively more complete analyses of the subject-object relation. He applies this perspective to contemporary thought, in the analysis of successively more adequate forms of idealism, including—following Hegel's own classification of his contemporaries—its subjective (Kant, Fichte) and objective (Schelling, Hegel) types.¹ The Hegelian interpretation of preceding theories invidiously suggests the tradition comes to a peak and an end in speculative idealism. In his reification essay and in the book on Hegel, Lukács adopts the same teleological schema, but substitutes Marx's view for Hegel's. In the Hegel study, following Hegel he endorses the Hegelian critique of Kant's and Fichte's subjective idealism in terms of objective idealism, which he then criticizes from the perspective of dialectical materialism. Subjective idealism falls short of objective idealism, but the latter falls short of dialectical materialism.

Following Hegel's own view of the matter, in the Hegel monograph he comprehends the difference between subjective and objective idealism in mainly epistemological terms. In his acceptance of Schelling's turn to a philosophy of nature, Hegel made the transition from mere consciousness to the real external world. In writings from his later Stalinist period, Lukács develops an overtly political reading of the epistemological difference between forms of idealism. Objective idealism marks a step beyond subjective idealism, although it falls short of dialectical materialism. Subjective idealism is doubly irrational. Epistemologically, it fails to engage the external world, which it cannot know. Politically, it gives rise to a form of irrationalism that later led to National Socialism.

There is an important difference between epistemological and political forms of irrationalism. If a theory is either idealism or materialism, and if only dialectical materialism is fully rational, all forms of idealism are epistemologically less than rational. In a word, it is epistemologically irrational to adopt idealism. The political division does not lie between idealism and materialism, but between forms of idealism. If it is not revolutionary, objective idealism is at least politically progressive. Only subjective idealism is politically reprehensible.²

Lukács's political interpretation of the significance between forms of idealism follows the Marxist view that the difference between types of thought is not politically neutral. In his later Stalinist texts, Lukács works out an agonistic theory of philosophy concerned with the political transformation of the advanced industrial society. The positions are either socially progressive or socially regressive, forms of reason or antireason. Philosophy is the theater of a great contest between Marxism and bourgeois thought. Bourgeois thought, or idealism, is opposed to political change. Marxism, or the representative of materialist dialectics, defines itself through the refusal of bourgeois thought and aims toward the overthrow of capitalism on the one hand and the triumph of the

proletariat over the bourgeoisie and the latter's form of thought on the other. Philosophy is promoted to the level of political struggle, since the future of the human race depends on winning the battle against idealism. Not only does subjective idealism fall short of adequate knowledge and impede political change; it further fosters the proliferation of regressive political tendencies.

Lukács develops his view of the intrinsic irrationality of non-Marxist or idealist, philosophy in two books from his later Stalinist period: *Existentialism or Marxism?* and *The Destruction of Reason*. These two books are very different. *Existentialism or Marxism?* is a relatively short, clearly polemical work. It originated as a series of lectures at the Rencontres Internationales de Genève (1946), and appeared in journal form in French¹ and in Hungarian.² It later reappeared in book form in German³ and in French.⁴ The German edition contains an appendix, written later, not included in the French edition, that considers Heidegger's thought in more detail.⁵ *The Destruction of Reason* is a much longer, more detailed study.⁶ It is based on two preliminary studies written while Lukács was living in the Soviet Union, but published only later: "How Did Fascist Philosophy Arise in Germany?" ("Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?")⁷ and "How Did Germany Become the Center of Reactionary Ideology?" ("Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?")¹⁰

There are important differences of emphasis and scope in the two works. The analysis of reason has a political aspect, but it is clearly a detailed historical study. The work on existentialism most closely resembles a political broadside (*Streitschrift*). In *The Destruction of Reason* Lukács offers a knowledgeable, closely reasoned, almost academic discussion, relevantly similar to his study of Hegel. Its theme is the genesis and political consequences of the rise of philosophical irrationalism in the period of contemporary capitalism. *Existentialism or Marxism?* is entirely concerned with

the restricted, philosophical question of a possible third way between idealism and materialism.

The dualistic approach widespread in German idealism is continued in the Marxist tendency to define itself as a materialism understood as the antithesis of idealism. In the German philosophical tradition, examples of dualism include Kant's synthesis of transcendental idealism and empirical realism and Fichte's classification of all philosophical positions as either idealism or realism.¹¹ *History and Class Consciousness* presupposed a distinction in kind between Marxism and non-Marxism, but *The Young Hegel* recognized a series of differences within non-Marxism, or idealism. Lukács later claimed that in the *Destruction of Reason* he opposed the dogma that all of modern philosophy rests exclusively on the opposition of materialism to idealism.¹² But in the texts from his later Stalinist period, Lukács appears to insist even more strictly on the difference in kind between materialism as such and all kinds of idealism.

His Marxist attack on existentialism presupposes, but does not examine, Engels's well-known claim that in the final analysis there are only two main philosophical positions, idealism and materialism. This claim is employed to separate materialism from idealism, or the wheat from the intellectual chaff so to speak. The aim of the book is to discuss and to evaluate the claim of existentialism to provide a putative third way that escapes the dichotomy between idealism and materialism. Since Lukács's analysis of existentialism is based upon the uncritical, prior acceptance of one of only two conceptual frameworks, clearly he must reject the effort to find a third way between the two alternatives he recognizes.

At this point, Lukács is uncompromisingly committed to Marxist orthodoxy. In the introduction to the French edition of *Existentialism or Marxism?* he states his concern with an ideological problem of imperialism, opposing two forms of thought: that which runs from Hegel to Marx, and that which links Schelling's

middle period, beginning in 1804, to Kierkegaard.¹³ The intellectual current leading from Hegel to Marx was discussed in detail in his Hegel monograph. The new element is the detailed attention to the strand of the philosophical tradition leading from the middle Schelling to Kierkegaard, including its political consequences.

As in his study of Hegel, Lukács develops his discussion of the period from the middle Schelling to Kierkegaard against a rich historical background. According to Lukács, materialism, to which Marxism belongs, is the result of a progressive movement in the development of philosophy. Idealism is a politically reactionary movement, directed against dialectical materialism, or Marxism. Just as objective idealism surpassed its subjective form, so materialism went beyond idealism of every kind. After the defeat of the revolution of 1848, there was a period of social tranquility, which was finally disturbed only by the beginning of the imperialist period. Within philosophy, the inception of imperialism led to the effort to save philosophical idealism through the appearance of a so-called third way. As concerns the theory of knowledge, the third way was supposedly neutral with respect to both idealism and materialism, whose alternatives it was intended to surpass. Existentialism is merely the newest form of idealism.

In Lukács's interpretation, existentialism is intrinsically opposed to Marxism. This claim is difficult since it is not obvious who is a member of the existentialist camp. In his book, Lukács discusses the views of Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Heidegger. If we consider Sartre, Beauvoir, and Merleau-Ponty, we can note that none of them is straightforwardly hostile to Marxism. Merleau-Ponty devotes extensive attention to Marxism's political claims, which he finally rejects.¹⁴ His careful evaluation of Marx and Marxism deserves special consideration because it specifically considers their political claims. Sartre later claimed to embrace Marxism.¹⁵ Heidegger refuses the label of existentialism for his own thought.¹⁶ Although he rejects Marx's theory as

metaphysics, he is generous in his appraisal of it as the only serious approach to history.¹⁷

The question of the relation between existentialism and Marxism becomes more complicated if, like Lukács, we include Heidegger as an existentialist, against his express wishes. The insistence by Lucien Goldmann, Lukács's disciple, that Heidegger's *Being and Time* was written in reaction to *History and Class Consciousness* presupposes Heidegger's direct knowledge of Lukács's work.¹⁸ Lukács makes a related claim in a way that does not suppose an acquaintance with any specific texts. He believes that objectively *Being and Time* is a polemical tract directed against the Marxist idea of fetishism and its consequences.¹⁹ His view rests on a historical approach to German philosophy, including the reactions by the later Schelling and especially Kierkegaard against Hegel, and the link between Hegel and Marx. On this basis, he differentiates a basic, if indirect, opposition between those thinkers influenced by the line of thought running from the middle Schelling to Kierkegaard, and those who claim allegiance to another line of thought connecting Hegel to Marx.

For Lukács, it is not specific doctrinal disputes, but rather the objective historical situation that created the opposition of existentialism and Marxism. He identifies three types of problems, including the search for objectivity in the domain of epistemology, the effort to safeguard freedom in the moral sphere, and the need for a philosophy of history to oppose idealism. These three groups of problems can be solved through Hegel's insight, as corrected by Marx, into the transitory status of social reality. The problem of the objectivity of knowledge is resolved by adopting a dialectical theory of human consciousness that reflects an independently existing external world.

In his later Stalinist period, Lukács proposes an increasingly orthodox interpretation of Marx and Marxism. In the reification essay he objected to Engels's naive epistemological views, including

the reflection theory of knowledge (*Widerspiegelungstheorie*). Here the correctness of the reflection theory is stressed. As in *History and Class Consciousness*, he insists on a view of history as produced by human beings. The difference is that he now connects Marxism, earlier regarded as the extension of classical German philosophy, to the Greek tradition. Its concrete and objective view of human freedom is the proper corrective to the existentialist idea of subjective freedom as well as the development of an idea already present in ancient thought. Marxism retains its claim to answer the problems of the philosophical tradition. But he opposes the nihilism, supposedly following from existentialism—as witness its inability to overcome its theological heritage and achieve a real anchoring in social reality—in the name of the fight for a new democracy.

The task of the introduction to *Existentialism or Marxism?* is twofold: to provide a brief, systematic presentation of the opposition between existentialism and Marxism; and to insist on Marxism as alone offering an adequate response to the problems common to the two perspectives. In the body of the work, Lukács argues for his view of Marxism. His argument begins with an analysis of the crisis of bourgeois philosophy followed by detailed consideration of the transition from phenomenology to existentialism. The succeeding discussion of the supposed impass of existentialist morality in the positions of Sartre, Beauvoir, and Merleau-Ponty is completed by a chapter on the Leninist theory of knowledge and the problems of modern philosophy. The appendix (*Anhang*) provides a separate, related account of “Heidegger redivivus.”

The theory of class consciousness central to Lukács’s early Marxist period presupposes that thought can remold the world in which we live. Lukács now reverses this view as part of his adherence to the orthodox line. The analysis of “The crisis of bourgeois philosophy”²⁰ relies on two well-known Marxist views: being is prior to thought, and social being determines social thought. On

this basis, he makes two claims. First, the most significant of the numerous signs that philosophy in the era of imperialism has lost its way is the emergence of the fascist world view. Second, the crisis of imperialism is reflected on the philosophical plane in the fact that philosophy has lost its way.

His general concern here is to show that the social crisis in advanced industrial society is reflected within non-Marxist philosophy. The crisis of philosophy, which mirrors that of capitalism itself, was latent until the beginning of First World War and only became evident at its end.²¹ The social determinism of the new social context is exhibited in the concrete form of fascism, which expresses the results of philosophy at the stage of imperialism in the language of reactionary capitalism.²² The philosophical reflection of the capitalist perspective is evident in a number of ways, including a turn away from economic, political and social problems,²³ and a return to subjective idealism in the field of epistemology.²⁴ The subjective, idealist form of epistemology manifests a tendency toward objectivism and pseudo-objectivity, the struggle against formalism as well as the appeal to intuition, and attention to questions of ideology.²⁵ The social role of the philosophical discussion of this period is to turn the attention of the intelligentsia away from the crisis and to prevent it from drawing socialist conclusions.²⁶

Lukács's overall diagnosis of philosophy's social role obviously depends on the overall accuracy of his description of thought in the period around the First World War. His remarks about philosophy in this period are unacceptable as a general characterization. For instance, the tendency toward objectivism is opposed by Husserl;²⁷ there is an important struggle for formalism in the work of the Vienna Circle and later students of analytic philosophy of science;²⁸ intuition is not a doctrine favored by analytic philosophy in general; and both phenomenology and analytic thought are disinclined to consider questions of ideology.

If his description of the philosophy of this period were incorrect, he might be correct about the return to subjective idealism and the development of philosophical myth. He insists that it is impossible to overestimate the influence of Nietzsche as the creator of the archetypal form of philosophical myth in this period.²⁹ Nietzsche is responsible for the rise of racist ideology, for the reliance on intuition widely apparent elsewhere in modern thought, and especially for the mythical transformation of the condition of the human being in advanced capitalism into the condition of human being as such.³⁰

Lukács's reading of Nietzsche—routinely but incorrectly described as a racist—is controversial.³¹ He exaggerates the direct influence of Nietzsche on later thought.³² With the exception of the later Sartre and perhaps Merleau-Ponty, existentialism in general relies on intuition and rejects a dialectical approach for an intuitive mode of thought.³³ This is also the case for Heidegger. But it does not follow that the reliance on intuition is in general symptomatic of the crisis of imperialism and the rise of fascism. On this basis, nondialectical, intuitionist theories, such as the views of G. E. Moore and Karl Jaspers, would then be fascist.

The account of the transition from phenomenology to existentialism begins with the remark that without doubt existentialism will become the dominant spiritual current of bourgeois thought in our time.³⁴ This optimistic reading of the future of this current does not correspond to its present philosophical influence. With the exception of Heidegger, whom Lukács unfairly places in the same camp, none of the existentialists now exerts more than minor influence. Their ideas are rarely cited in the current debate. It is possible that this tendency may be an indirect beneficiary of the political controversy now surrounding Heidegger's Nazism. But in general, existentialism has failed to achieve the expected philosophical prominence and receded into the history of philosophy.

Lukács quickly reviews three aspects of existentialism: the phenomenological view of method with special reference to Husserl; the concept of nothingness; and the idea of freedom. He maintains that the phenomenological method cannot provide knowledge of reality since it neglects social conditions,³⁵ and, as a result, leads back to neo-Kantianism.³⁶ This statement is doubly inaccurate. First, there is an obvious distinction between the phenomenological method and its object. Second, it has been widely applied to the social world. Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein* (*Daseinsanalytik*), the main theme of his early fundamental ontology, is a phenomenological analysis from the angle of vision of human being, or *Dasein*, understood as existence.³⁷ From another perspective, Alfred Schutz has developed an extensive phenomenological theory of the social world with close connections to Husserl's conception of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*).³⁸

Lukács insists on the social significance of particular elements of existential philosophy, which he does not merely dismiss. He objects to the concept of nothingness as a subjective reflection of the objective situation, or a fetishization of nothing as nothingness,³⁹ where a "fetish" is "the illegitimate assumption of an isolated and autonomous object."⁴⁰ His objection is comparatively milder than the positivist reading of the phenomenological view of nothingness as meaningless.⁴¹ He further complains about the Sartrean fetishization of freedom as free choice of self.⁴² But this complaint is based on a category mistake since in Marx's theory "fetishism" occurs when an inanimate thing takes on human attributes, for instance when human beings are made dependent on commodities in the process of production.⁴³ It should be noted that his objection to the existentialist freedom as merely a form of eclectic Kantianism,⁴⁴ which simply fails to take into account real social relations,⁴⁵ was later adopted by Sartre himself.⁴⁶

More than a third of the book is devoted to an analysis of an impass he detects in "existentialist ethics" (*Ethik*),⁴⁷ but the discus-

sion is wider than this term would suggest. Lukács typically argues for the intrinsic incompatibility between existentialism and Marxism and for the conceptual superiority of the latter view. There is a series of remarks on Sartrean ethics centered on the essay "Existentialism is a Humanism." In the absence of any Sartrean treatise on ethics, Lukács turns quickly to an analysis of the later Sartre's relation to Marxism under the provocative heading of Sartre against Marxism.⁴⁸

This analysis is difficult to relate to Sartre's corpus since no specific writings are cited. Although Lukács's critique is typically uncompromising, it is noteworthy that at the time it was formulated Sartre was in the process of moving closer to Marxism.⁴⁹ In the course of his critique, Lukács makes three points. To begin with, the term "metaphysical Marxism" must be rejected since Marxism is a dialectical theory that consists in the rejection of metaphysics.⁵⁰ Second, existentialism and Marxism are incompatible since the former is a phenomenological and psychological analysis of the isolated individual, whereas the Marxist analysis of history begins only where existentialism stops.⁵¹ If this summary judgment is correct for Sartre's position, it is contradicted by Merleau-Ponty's theory.⁵² Finally, he strongly denies that Marxism fails to understand the role of subjectivity in the social and historical context.⁵³ This is, in fact, the defect of existentialism.⁵⁴

In sum, Lukács maintains that Sartre fails to understand Marxism. This critique is perhaps fair for Sartre's early phenomenological and existential phases, which are not directly concerned with Marxism.⁵⁵ It is less than fair for the later evolution of Sartre's thought, after Lukács composed his book, which he certainly could not anticipate. A complete assessment of Sartre's grasp of and contribution to Marxism would need to consider other Sartrean texts including "Communists and Peace," "Materialism and Revolution," *The Family Idiot*, and above all the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*.

Lukács's remarks on Simone de Beauvoir acknowledge her relatively greater knowledge of Marxism and attention to the Soviet Union. But she shares Sartre's error of taking the isolated individual as the starting point,⁴⁶ which is a mere Robinsonnade.⁴⁷ In an important passage, Lukács now states the Marxist counterpart to the existentialist view of human being. "Here it should be noticed, that in this regard on the one hand a conception of man as a thoroughly social essence is necessary, and the insight that the most personal problems of the 'most solitary' [*einsamsten*] individual have their social side; on the other hand, that man's freedom is similarly a social and historical problem, and freedom can only have a concrete content and a concrete dialectical relation to necessity if it is conceived in its historical-social genesis as the struggle of man with nature through the mediation of different social formations and the historical-social genesis of freedom is understood from the primordial subordination of men to natural forces, arising out of the 'second nature.'"⁴⁸

Merleau-Ponty's even greater knowledge of Marxism is said to result in a tension between a manifest concern with objectivity and a variable attachment to existentialist principles.⁴⁹ Lukács notes Merleau-Ponty's concern with the problem of ethical and historical responsibility,⁴⁰ but rejects his attachment to Leon Trotsky.⁴¹ He brings two objections against Merleau-Ponty's position. First, it is unacceptable on the formal ground that a compromise between existentialism and Marxism is impossible.⁴² This abstract point, devoid of concrete analysis, is consistent with the orthodox Marxist division of modern philosophy into two incompatible approaches, but it is incompatible with Marx's insistence on practice. Second, Merleau-Ponty's view of history is finally unsatisfactory since it is mystical,⁴³ or both rational and contingent.⁴⁴ This conclusion follows directly from the orthodox Marxist view that non-Marxism as such is false.

The first three chapters of *Existentialism or Marxism?* are de-

voted to the refutation of three leading forms of existentialism. In the fourth and final chapter Marx and Marxism are presented as the appropriate alternative. Lukács's initial form of Marxism was mainly based on Engels with little direct reference to Lenin. In *History and Class Consciousness* he publicly presented a seemingly orthodox, but, in fact unorthodox form of Marxism marked by a dialogue with Engels, Luxemburg, and various other Marxists. Lukács abjured his brilliant breakthrough to Marxism in *History and Class Consciousness* almost immediately when Lenin's work, *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* (1908) appeared in German translation in 1924.⁶ Most orthodox Marxists are content merely to assert the superiority of Marxism-Leninism. But typically Lukács is distinguished by his effort to argue the claim, in principle required of any adherent to Marxist orthodoxy. The interest of this chapter is the difficult effort to present Marxism-Leninism as the solution to the problem of knowledge.

Lukács's defense of Marxism-Leninism is merely the latest version of an argument made in different fashion in his earlier Marxist writings. In comparison with earlier versions, its specific difference lies in the rigid, conceptually impoverished analysis, uncomfortably close to Engels's simplistic interpretation. His new demonstration of the superiority of Marxism manifests two main characteristics. On the one hand, it stresses the way in which a historical and dialectical form of materialism surpasses both Hegel's dialectic form of objective idealism as well as a nondialectical, mechanistic materialism. Hence, it defends a dialectical view of Marxism-Leninism. Lukács here implicitly supports the Debordists in the struggle against the mechanists.⁶ On the other hand, it continually stresses the manner in which the Leninist form of dialectical materialism is able to accommodate the newest results of modern science. Presumably, then, idealism is incompatible with the new science, and hence false, whereas materialism is compatible with modern science, and hence true.

Lukács's intelligence is manifest despite the often dogmatic nature of his Marxist writing. Even the most politically abject writings of his Stalinist period are not devoid of insight. Lukács makes several interesting points in the course of his demonstration of the alleged epistemological superiority of Marxism-Leninism over idealism. Once again he relies on Engels's dichotomous analysis of all possible philosophical viewpoints. The old struggle between idealism and materialism has now taken on a new form in the search for a putative third way, although there is in fact no other alternative. "In short: The development of the natural and the social sciences in the course of the nineteenth century make philosophical idealism impossible by confronting it with insoluble contradictions. As, however, the ruling social and political currents cannot remove idealism from its world view, this crisis appeared [*offenbart*], since the attempt was made time after time to discover a philosophical 'third way', with whose help it—supposedly—would be possible to overcome idealism as well as materialism. In reality, this naturally only concerned a renewal of idealism in a distorted form, in new forms of the fight against the materialistic world view."⁶⁷

It is easier to assert idealism's incompatibility with modern science than to demonstrate it. There is no known successful form of this argument. Significantly, no specific developments are cited that result in contradictions between idealism and recent science, insoluble or otherwise. The frequent claim that a philosophical third way is impossible is also undemonstrated. It is unclear how it could possibly be made out.⁶⁸ The distinction between idealism and materialism is neither natural, nor univocal, and perhaps not even plausible.⁶⁹

Lukács's sympathies lie with the Marxist analysis that precisely excludes a possible third alternative to the polar opposites of materialism and idealism. He notes that Lenin explicitly adopted this Engelsian view.⁷⁰ In a reference to existentialism, he further notes

that the dominant tendency of philosophy in the age of imperialism is the search for a third approach.⁷¹ This claim ignores the fact that Lenin's view that matter is independent of mind, which Lukács also cites,⁷² is supported to varying degrees by various forms of philosophical materialism. It follows that the effort to surpass the dichotomy between idealism and materialism is at most characteristic of no more than a small subsection of contemporary thought.

Epistemology is central to Lukács's Marxism as early as *History and Class Consciousness*, where he strongly insists on the virtues of the proletarian standpoint. Here, he makes three interesting observations about a Marxist theory of knowledge. First, the crisis of physics in this century is linked to the failure of mechanistic materialism, which leaves dialectical materialism untouched.⁷³ This provides a reason to abandon one form of materialism in favor of another. It further suggests that the debate within orthodox Marxism between proponents of these two forms of materialism concerns the future of science itself. Second, now silently abandoning his earlier rejection of reflection theory, he argues for a dialectical form of the Marxist theory of reflection.⁷⁴ This is a theory of knowledge that approximates ever more closely to an independent reality, relevantly similar to certain realist views of the philosophy of science. Third, he ascribes the solution of the problem of totality, earlier attributed to Marx, to Lenin.⁷⁵

The discussion of Marxist epistemology ends with a comment on the relation of the subject of knowledge and practical action. He attributes to Lenin the view that the crisis of bourgeois philosophy results in an irrationalistic philosophical tendency.⁷⁶ And he stresses that the Marxist view of knowledge is in fact a form of humanism.⁷⁷ He ends the book with a discussion of Heidegger, important in the context of renewed attention to Heidegger's Nazism.⁷⁸ In retrospect, Lukács's emphasis on the continuity in Heidegger's position before and after the Second World War is impor-

tant since Heidegger's supporters have tried to interpret the claimed turning in his thought as a turning away from National Socialism.⁷⁹

The *Destruction of Reason*, which follows closely upon the heels of *Existentialism or Marxism?*, continues the analysis of the intrinsic irrationality of non-Marxist philosophy. But there is a significant change in perspective. The study of existentialism stressed the way in which the fruitless search for an impossible alternative to materialism and idealism was in fact a surreptitious return to idealism. In the study of reason the focus shifts from the need to choose between one of two perspectives to the social consequences of idealism.

Here as in Lukács's preceding Marxist writings, idealism is a theory whose inability to reach truth follows from its relation to the social context in which it arises. It is further politically regressive, since it prevents, or at least impedes, the effort to bring about a basic social change. In the discussion of reason, Lukács adds another dimension to his Marxist critique of non-Marxist philosophy. Idealism is not only problematic on the general grounds that it cannot yield knowledge and retards progress; it is further problematic since at least one current, subjective idealism, has contributed to the rise of German fascism. In sum, idealism is not only problematic because of what it fails to do, but also because of what it has supposedly done.

The discussion of reason is large, even by Lukács's generous standards.⁸⁰ Its sheer size makes it difficult to discuss briefly even in outline. As was the case for the studies of Hegel and of existentialism, this treatise is intended as a preliminary contribution to a Marxist history of philosophy. The book begins with an account of the relation of philosophy to the social surroundings. Following Lenin's theory of partyiness (*partiinost*), Lukács again insists that there is and can be no innocent philosophy, that is, a theory that is politically neutral and neither dependent nor influential upon its

social and historical context.¹¹ Philosophical theories are not determined by other such theories; they are rather determined by the evolution of the surrounding context in which they occur.¹² The task of Marxism-Leninism is to provide an immanent critique that will show the falsity and distortion of basic philosophical questions.¹³

In *History and Class Consciousness*, Lukács maintained that there is no neutral perspective and that the standpoint of the proletariat is superior. He maintains a similar claim here. His understanding of idealism as false, or finally false because of its relation to the social context of capitalism, is present as early as *History and Class Consciousness*. The difference, which is a matter of degree, lies in the relatively greater insistence on a relation of a theory to its surroundings as a criterion of correctness and the relatively greater neglect of specifically philosophical factors.

The discussion in *Destruction of Reason* innovates in its consideration of the practical consequences of non-Marxist thought. Lukács here considers the notion of irrationality in detail.¹⁴ He describes Germany as the classic land of irrationalism. Just as Marx studied capitalism in England, the philosophical form of irrationality can most profitably be studied in Germany.¹⁵ Irrationalism is not merely a philosophical error, since it has grave practical consequences. Every veillieity of philosophical irrationalism brings with it the possibility of a fascist ideology. Through his discussion in this book of Germany's path to Hitler in the sphere of philosophy, Lukács hopes to enable Germany to understand and hence to overcome the possibility of a revival of the fascism that arose within its borders.¹⁶

Lukács's critique of the political results of subjective idealism is based on the traditional philosophical claim for the relevance of reason, above all for philosophical reason. At this late date, one can no longer maintain that philosophy as such is the indispensable condition to the good life. At most, only some forms of philoso-

phy can be understood as socially useful. If philosophy can be practically relevant, it can also be irrelevant or even harmful.

It is important to understand Lukács's point. He is not suggesting that idealism as such is irrational, since he insists on the distinction between idealist irrationalism and idealist rationalism. In fact, he could not make that suggestion without abandoning a basic component of his Marxist faith, namely, the insistence that Marx's theory is the "reverse" of Hegel's. He is rather claiming that subjective idealism is irrational in all its forms, and that this philosophical option had and necessarily has grave political consequences. He supports this claim through an interactionist analysis of the relation of theory to its social context. An interactionist theory makes two basic claims. First, the social and historical surroundings, but not other philosophical views, determine the theory that arises from them. Second, the resultant theory in turn acts upon its extratheoretical framework. In arguing that irrationalism, defined as the alternative to Marxism, in some sense leads to fascism, Lukács implies clearly, but unconvincingly, that fascism is in part a consequence of the failure to opt for philosophical materialism.

The demonstration of this thesis begins in a review of Germany's historical development in order to demonstrate the link between German thought and the German social context. Through a review of Germany's historical development he suggests that the socio-political way for the triumph of fascism⁸⁷ was paved by the expansion of monopoly capitalism after World War I.⁸⁸ This expansion and the related emphasis on reformism gave rise to a new idea of rationality⁸⁹ and made the working class helpless.⁹⁰ As a result, the masses of workers turned toward Marxism, in fact, toward Leninism, whereas the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie were led to despair.⁹¹ The conceptual consequence was a philosophy of despair⁹² that entered the books from reality and not conversely.⁹³ According to Lukács, the rise of fascist ideology "was only the ultimate culmination of a long process which ini-

tially had an 'innocent' look [innocent in a strictly or more generally philosophical sense]: the destruction of reason."³⁴

Lukács's claim is general, but his analysis centers on Germany as the supposed land of irrationalism. His reading of the relation of German thought and German social reality is highly problematic. His reductionistic interpretation of the rise of fascist ideology through economic factors alone simply ignores a wide variety of other determinants not obviously explicable through monopoly capitalism or even in economic terms. An incomplete list of other elements that should be part of a complete account includes the German defeat in World War I as well as the subsequent reparations and national humiliation, the worldwide economic catastrophe of 1929, the rise of *Volksideologie* since the nineteenth century, including the general concept of the mission of the German people in world history, the political ineptness of the Weimar Republic, the widely shared concern to seek a political third way between Bolshevism and democratic liberalism, German expansionist tendencies which reached an early peak in Otto Von Bismarck, the fear of communism as such, and so on.

After his account of the historical background of the irrationalist movement in Germany, Lukács considers its conceptual background in the period between the two revolutions of 1789 and 1848. His analysis is important for an understanding of his reading of non-Marxism as irrationalism. In his account of the views that led up to the form of irrationalism supposedly prevalent after the First World War, for the first time he elucidates the concept of irrationalism constantly presupposed in his Marxist writings.

The Destruction of Reason studies the political consequences of a type of idealism, but for Lukács irrationalism is essentially epistemological in character. In *History and Class Consciousness*, idealism in general was unable to know its object. If a cognizable object appears as uncognizable, as is the case for idealist reason of every variety, then idealism as such is irrational in comparison to

Marxism, which "knows" the thing-in-itself. In the work on reason, Lukács revises his earlier view. Idealism still falls below the epistemological level of Marxism; but because objective idealism is rationalist idealism is no longer irrationalist as such. The result is to displace the distinction between irrationalism and rationalism, which was earlier interpreted as coextensive with that between idealism and Marxism, through a new distinction between rationalism and irrationalism within idealism.

In the reification essay, Lukács employed insights borrowed from Lask to identify the irrationalism of classical German philosophy, especially in the writings of the later Fichte. He now strengthens this claim. In part following Kuno Fischer's work on Fichte, Lukács again quotes the famous passage from Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1804, where he speaks of the absolute projection of an object as the *projectio per hiatus irrationalem*, before drawing a connection to Lask. Lukács comments: "This recourse to irrationalism, like the whole of Fichte's later epistemology, had no influence on subsequent developments. Only in Lask can we see the influence of the later Fichte to any profound extent, while isolated fascists have endeavoured to include Fichte's name in their roll of ancestors."⁵

In his comment on Fichte, Lukács identifies irrationality as the claim to the limitation of rationality. Fichte's later position is irrational in virtue of his insistence on the cognitively impenetrable nature of the relation of subjectivity to objectivity. As Lukács indicates in a reference to Hegel, irrationalism lies in the recognition of incommensurabilities and irrationalities that lie beyond the principle of understanding.* As in the reification essay, he identifies as irrational the view that thought is inadequate to master reality: "Now irrationalism begins with this (necessary, irrevocable, but always relative) discrepancy between the intellectual reflection and the objective original. The source of the discrepancy lies in the fact that the tasks directly presented to thought in a

given instance, as long as they are still tasks, still unresolved problems, appear in a form which at first gives the impression that thought, the forming of concepts, breaks down in the face of reality, that the reality confronting thought represents an area beyond reason (the rationality of the category system of the conceptual method used so far)."⁹⁷

If it is irrational to set limits to knowledge, then it is rational to hold that knowledge is in principle unlimited. Idealism has the reputation of making exaggerated claims to know, of extending reason beyond the range of its legitimate employment. Marxism insists, if necessary even against idealism, that there are no limits to our ability to know social reality. Lukács further examines how an individual chooses irrationalism. Such a choice must be extra- or nonrational since it is not rational to reject rationality. It is well known that Fichte thought that the acceptance of a type of philosophy was in principle made on prephilosophic grounds because he believed that the type of philosophy one chooses is a function of who one is.⁹⁸ Lukács maintains that the choice between reason and unreason is never a simply philosophical alternative, but is dictated by extraphilosophical reasons of class membership.⁹⁹ Irrationalism is visible in such ways as the turning away from problems by Blaise Pascal,¹⁰⁰ the blurring of the lines between epistemology and psychology in Jacobi's thought,¹⁰¹ and in phenomenology in general.¹⁰²

In virtue of its claim to unlimited knowledge dialectical materialism, the alternative to irrationalism, could also be called "dialectical rationalism." It is not a mere abstract theory; it is rather the effort to grasp the concrete, dialectical movement of society. In a remark on the views of Vico, J. G. von Herder, J. G. Hamann and Rousseau, Lukács writes: "Our sole purpose was to underline the basic dialectical tendency which, in all these authors, aimed at developing the history of mankind and human society out of its autonomous movement, the deeds and sufferings of men them-

selves, and at grasping the reason, i.e., the principles behind the movement."¹⁰³

This statement points to an implicit social ontology, a theory of history, as the epistemological justification of the conception of irrationality. Social ontology in this sense rests on three presuppositions. First, human history develops through and can be grasped in terms of human actions. Second, human actions, the principles of movement behind human history, are intrinsically rational. Third, the principles of human history and, as a result, human history itself, can be known. If history is composed of human actions, it does not follow that it can be known unless human actions can be known.¹⁰⁴ But it is a mere methodological postulate that human history embodies rational principles that unfold over time. This claim is not obvious, and has been denied in various ways, including the insistence on the incompatibility of knowledge and change¹⁰⁵ or the denial of historical continuity.¹⁰⁶

Lukács's depiction of history as intrinsically rational is based on his prior acceptance of the Marxist approach to the analysis of human activity in economic terms. It is only if history is entirely cognizable that any effort to set epistemological limits can plausibly be rejected. But there is an important distinction between a limit to knowledge and a claim of irrationality. The effort to set limits to knowledge is not obviously false and a theory embodying this perspective, such as Kant's critical philosophy, is not, in virtue of this concern, irrational. Lukács's claim on behalf of dialectical materialism echoes Kant's unfortunate assertion that all of human reason depends on accepting his critical philosophy.¹⁰⁷ But to fail to accept dialectical materialism, or even the critical philosophy, is not to deny reason as such; it is merely to deny a form of philosophy. It is, then irrational to deny the possibility of other forms of rationality.

The rise of philosophical irrationalism is studied in the positions of Schelling, Schopenhauer, and Kierkegaard. Together with

Nietzsche, these theories are selected as illustrations of irrationalism as it arose respectively in the period between the two revolutions and in the imperialist epoch. Lukács earlier discussed Schelling in his Hegel monograph. Here he praises Schelling for the turn away from Fichte toward objective idealism, but he criticizes Schelling for his dispute with Hegel. Lukács believes that modern irrationalism arose from the socio-economic crisis at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁸ Examples include Schelling's reliance on intuition,¹⁰⁹ his so-called epistemological aristocratism,¹¹⁰ his denial of evolution,¹¹¹ and his subjective view of time.¹¹² Hegel's well-known critique of Schelling in the *Phenomenology* is part of the struggle against irrationalism.¹¹³

Schopenhauer's position, which chronologically precedes the irrationalism in Schelling's later evolution, is typical of a more advanced stage of irrationalism. "In fine: it is in Schopenhauer that the purely bourgeois version of irrationalism crops up for the first time—not only within German philosophy but also on an international scale."¹¹⁴ Schopenhauer anticipated tendencies that became important only after the revolution of 1848, particularly in his well-known philosophical pessimism.¹¹⁵ This doctrine is a philosophical rationale for the absurdity of all political action,¹¹⁶ which results in a devaluation of action¹¹⁷ and philosophical egotism.¹¹⁸ His pessimism is an ideological reflection of the age of restoration¹¹⁹ that justifies the prevailing social situation. "This irrationalism thereby reaches its central objective—no matter how far Schopenhauer himself was aware of it: that of providing an indirect apologetic of the capitalist social order."¹²⁰ But in the assertion that capitalism acts through individuals without their knowledge, Lukács invokes the kind of mystical explanatory principle, a Marxist form of the cunning of reason, that he earlier rejected in *History and Class Consciousness* in Hegel's conception of the absolute.

Following Hegel, the transition from Schelling to Schopenhauer is characterized as marking the regression from objective idealism

to subjective idealism.¹²¹ Lukács describes Schopenhauer as an anti-dialectician, and Kierkegaard, in part relying on F. A. Trendelenburg, as a subjective pseudodialectical thinker.¹²² Kierkegaard's pseudodialectic resides in the turn away from dialectical logic in favor of formal logic,¹²³ in the rejection of a theory of knowing based on approximation,¹²⁴ and in his asocial theory of ethics.¹²⁵ Lukács sums up his reading of Kierkegaard in an especially bleak passage: "So we have: despair as a spiritual basis, irrationality as a content and, connected with it, the theoretical impossibility of spiritual communication between men, the absolute incognito. These, with Kierkegaard, characterize both the aesthetic and the religious."¹²⁶

The discussion of irrationalist thought in the period between the two revolutions closes with a statement of the negative social role supposedly played by philosophical irrationalism as well as the specific influence of the three thinkers surveyed. "Indirect apologetics in ethics have the task of steering intellectuals, sometimes rebellious ones, back to the path of the bourgeoisie's reactionary development, while preserving all their intellectual and moral pretensions to a superior ease in this respect. In devising such methods, Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard played pioneering roles. Their epigones (Nietzsche was not, of course, one of them, since he carried on the trend towards militant reaction) did not invent anything fundamentally new. They merely adapted these methods to the imperialist bourgeoisie's increasingly reactionary needs. Casting off more and more that residue of consistency, of good faith, which Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard still evinced in part, they increasingly became pure apologists of bourgeois decadence, and nothing else."¹²⁷

The treatment of Nietzsche as the founder of irrationalism in the age of imperialism is a mixture of admiration for the latter's talent and of orthodox Marxist cant. After the experience of the Paris Commune, and the founding of the First Internationale,

bourgeois philosophy and science rose to the defense of class interests¹²⁸ and turned increasingly against socialism.¹²⁹ "In view of this, how can we maintain of Nietzsche that his whole life's work was a continuous polemic against Marxism and socialism, when it is perfectly clear that he never read a single line of Marx and Engels? We believe that the claim is still feasible, for the reason that every philosophy's content and method are determined by the class struggles of its age."¹³⁰

For Hegel, the history of philosophy was a dialogue over time. It is reasonable to regard contemporary thinkers with conflicting points of view as participating in a common discussion, whose limits they may not know. Lukács, however, rejects the general claim that contemporary theories are ingredients in an ongoing discussion for a more specific assertion of direct opposition. For Lukács different contemporary theories are less representative of prevalent tendencies than specifically opposed. This reading of contemporary thought as a class struggle explains the oppositional character of his interpretation of Nietzsche's relation to Marxism.

Nietzsche lacked any real economic knowledge.¹³¹ The center of his thought was a resistance to socialism and to the effort to create an imperial Germany.¹³² His claimed opposition to socialism¹³³ is visible in his emphasis on egotism,¹³⁴ in the analysis of class struggle in racial terms,¹³⁵ in the attempt to find a third way between idealism and materialism,¹³⁶ in the opposition to human equality,¹³⁷ and in the rejection of historical novelty in the doctrine of the eternal return of the same in order to suggest that capitalism cannot be transcended.¹³⁸ Lukács concludes that Nietzsche created the model for the indirect apology for capitalism. "Here again, Nietzsche's philosophy is the imperialist myth designed to counter socialist humanism."¹³⁹

The critical account of Nietzsche's position is representative of the discussion in this book. Two points should be noted about Lukács's analysis of Nietzsche. First, his critique rests on the as-

sumption that philosophical perspectives are not only related to, but in fact are called into being by the social problems of the age. No one denies that there is some relation between philosophical ideas and the social, political, and conceptual context in which they arise. This claim becomes interesting only when the relation receives a causal interpretation, as in the Marxist theory of ideology, which Lukács here applies to the interpretation of Nietzsche and others. But this assertion is suspect since Lukács never demonstrates but only asserts a causal relation between a type of theory and a type of social context. To express the same point in Human terminology, Lukács calls attention to the conjunction between Nietzsche's views and the social problems of the age, but he does not demonstrate a causal connection.

Second, the analysis of particular positions is consistently conducted from an external point of view. In this book, Lukács never evaluates positions immanently, that is, through study of the arguments they present; he always argues against a position by counterposing the position of the writer, in this case Nietzsche, to his own views. A constant feature of Lukács's discussion is the assumption that where a position differs from his, it is both wrong and reactionary. But this frequently asserted claim remains abstract and a priori, without demonstration through the concrete analysis of particular positions. In other words, while Lukács is uniformly and highly critical of other views, he is hardly self-critical.

Lukács in part answers this objection in his lengthy account of vitalism (*Lebensphilosophie*) in imperial Germany. His analysis is not concerned with the psychological intentions of the individual writer, but rather with the objective dialectical analysis of the development itself.¹⁴⁰ He describes the vitalist movement, which spread throughout German culture prior to the First World War, as a further stage of philosophical irrationalism.¹⁴¹ In virtue of its protean status, vitalism is difficult to describe. He depicts it as a

degenerative form of subjective idealism: "In fine: the essence of vitalism lies in a conversion of agnosticism into mysticism, of subjective idealism into the pseudo-objectivity of myth."¹⁴²

Lukács's interpretation of vitalism is unconvincing. If it were possible to free claims for objectivity from the theory in which they arise, then one could condemn theories in the name of objectivity. The assertion of objectivity is routine in theories of knowledge. But as in the case of irrationalism, there is a distinction between what is objective from a given perspective and what is objective as such. Knowledge concerns objectivity, but it is unclear how to argue for it other than from a limited perspective. To fail to recognize this distinction is to run the risk of taking a presupposed but unjustified standard as an absolute criterion of value.

The obvious question is why a supposedly unscientific form of thought achieved widespread popularity, particularly in philosophical circles. Lukács holds that the explanation of the popularity of vitalism is to be sought less in its scientific character, which is intrinsically modest, than in its agreement with the *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the age). "But for a 'philosophy' with so little foundation or coherence, so profoundly unscientific and coarsely dilettantish to become prevalent, what were needed were a specific philosophical mood, a disintegration of confidence in understanding and reason, the destruction of human faith in progress, and credulity towards irrationalism, myth and mysticism. And vitalism created just this philosophical mood."¹⁴³

This statement relies on the assumption, present throughout this work, that theories are determined by their social surroundings. It is one thing to identify the relation of a position to the contemporary conceptual, social, and historical background; it is something else to evaluate its claims for truth. Lukács simply conflates the link between vitalism and its background on the one hand, and its philosophical worth on the other. Even his effort to relate vitalism to the contemporary *Zeitgeist* is questionable. Roughly the same

period in which vitalism arose also saw the emergence of analytic philosophy and positivism, two views diametrically opposed to it. It follows that either some views, but not all can be understood as a function of the *Zeitgeist*, or the spirit of the times is intrinsically pluralistic and reflected in incompatible philosophical theories.

Lukács is not concerned to write a history of vitalism, even in outline. He restricts his discussion to the identification of some main parts of the vitalist movement, with particular attention to Dilthey, Simmel, Max Scheler, Heidegger and Jaspers, with some additional comments on overtly pre-fascist and fascist vitalism in the writings of Ludwig Klages, Ernst Jünger, Baeumler, Böhme, Ernst Krieck and Alfred Rosenberg. His reading of vitalism in general, against the social background, is perhaps best illustrated by his interpretation of Dilthey. Like other vitalists, Dilthey appealed to intuition as a substitute for reason, inadequate to grasp life itself. As Dilthey acknowledged, the result is an intrinsically irrational element in the knowing process.

Lukács assesses Dilthey's position in terms of its relation to the historical moment in which it arose. He discerns in Dilthey's thought an aristocratic angle of vision. "Seen from the angle of Dilthey's propositions, which, as we have noted, express a deep-seated ideological need among the bourgeois intelligentsia of the imperialist age, this methodologically central position of intuition is an inevitable consequence. Hopeless situations call for desperate remedies. And as always in the history of philosophy when a remedy is sought and, it is believed, found in a *salto mortale*, the real epistemological and methodological preconditions of the 'solution' escaped examination."¹⁴⁴

For Lukács vitalism provides a deficient response to the objectively difficult social conditions in Germany, particularly as judged by the standards of rigorous scientific philosophy. The turn toward vitalism is explicable only in terms of an effort to find a

solution that would magically resolve the problems of society without affecting the privileges of the bourgeoisie. To adopt magical thinking as an explanatory factor is, however, to open a Pandora's box. Lukács's explanation remains unconvincing since there is no reason to hold that this factor is operative for vitalism but not elsewhere, for instance in theories that claim to know the secret of history.

In his comments on other representatives of vitalism, Lukács isolates those factors he regards as most significant in the turn toward irrationalism. Dilthey was a transitional figure, but Simmel is a representative of the imperialist age.¹⁴⁵ Lukács objects strenuously to Simmel's desire to ground historical materialism.¹⁴⁶ He is even more critical of Oswald Spengler, whom he treats as a direct precursor of fascist philosophy.¹⁴⁷ He notes Spengler's well-known preoccupation with intuition as opposed to reason, extreme historical relativism, and opposition to natural science.¹⁴⁸ In his view, Spengler opposes Marxism and Marxist socialism on the basis of a supposed racial difference grounded in a conception of true Prussian socialism.¹⁴⁹

Lukács's general remarks on Heidegger supplement his more specific comments in the appendix to his book on existentialism.¹⁵⁰ He helpfully relates Heidegger's stress on the so-called agony of individualism to the fearful and anxious pessimism of the solitary ego.¹⁵¹ The method of phenomenological intuition is at best pseudo-objective.¹⁵² In an elaboration of his claim, he helpfully calls attention to Heidegger's insistence on the distinction between essence and phenomenon, before commenting on the intrinsic limitations of the latter's method. "For in this method, 'intuition of the essence' alone can decide what is to be comprehended as 'concealed essence' in immediate present reality perceived directly by the subject. Thus with Heidegger, too, the objectivity of the ontological materiality remained purely declarative, and the proclamation of

the ontological objectivity could lead only to a heightening of the pseudo-objectivism and—owing to the intuitivistic selection principle and criterion—irrationality of this sphere of objectiveness.”¹⁵³

Lukács’s objection to the phenomenological method extends a reading of Heidegger’s thought to phenomenology as a whole. His critical remarks, which overlook the differences between different forms of the phenomenological method, are inaccurate as a characterization of phenomenology in general. Husserl, for instance, constantly insisted on repetition as the criterion of truth.¹⁵⁴ It is, then, difficult to speak of pseudo-objectivism for his theory. This is not the case for Heidegger. One cannot deny the “declarative,” unverifiable, gnostic character of Heidegger’s phenomenology. Recent Heidegger scholarship has tended to emphasize that there is no philosophical justification for his thought, particularly his later position, which simply resists philosophical justification.¹⁵⁵

Consistent with his interpretation of vitalism and other forms of irrationalism, Lukács sees Heidegger’s thought as responding more to the needs of a certain social class than to philosophical argument. “Heidegger’s descriptions are related to the spiritual conditions promoted by the crisis of post-war imperialistic capitalism. There is evidence for this not only in the influence exercised by *Being and Time*, far beyond the sphere of the really philosophically-minded—it was repeatedly singled out for praise and censure by philosophical critics. What Heidegger was describing was the subjective-bourgeois, intellectual reverse side of the economic categories of capitalism—in the form, of course, of a radically idealistic subjectifying and hence a distortion.”¹⁵⁶

The reaction of the wider public, and even the restricted philosophical community, is due in part to themes that are in the air so to speak. As for Sartre, the popularity of the early Heidegger was in part a function of his ability to restate current concerns in philosophical terms.¹⁵⁷ But his thought also attracted interest because of its unusually penetrating character, the manner in which

it opened new avenues of discussion. Lukács simply overlooks the specifically philosophical side of Heidegger's position, which he in effect reduces to the doctrines it espouses. As is his custom, Lukács rejects Heidegger's views on the simplistic grounds that since they conflict with Marxism-Leninism they are necessarily false.

His interpretation of Marx's relation to Hegel in terms of dialectic colors his remarks on Hegel and the neo-Hegelians. He correctly defends Hegel against certain criticisms raised by the neo-Hegelians, particularly Dilthey, on the grounds that they failed to perceive the unity of his thought over time.¹⁵⁹ Although he is deeply knowledgeable about Hegel, surprisingly he fails to comprehend the importance of system in Hegel's thought, which he simply rejects in favor of dialectic. "But whereas at the one extreme, Hegel's reactionary systematizing tendencies vanished from the philosophical scene, that which was alive, forward-looking and progressive in his thought, namely the dialectical method, entered into the higher world-outlook, into dialectical materialism."¹⁵⁹

This unfortunate description of Marx's relation to Hegel should be resisted for five reasons. First, the conception of system goes back in the philosophical tradition at least to Aristotle, well before capitalism. For Lukács, the terms "progressive" and "regressive" have a political meaning with respect to modern industrialized society. Lukács neither shows nor attempts to show a link between Hegel's view of system and capitalism. Unless Hegel's conception of system has a specific political coloration, it is a mistake to refer to it as reactionary. Second, his description exhibits a category mistake in the conflation of a philosophical doctrine and its political consequences. The notion of systematicity represents a philosophical decision, which should not be conflated with possible political consequences. Third, according to Marxist dogma Marx's position is the reverse of Hegel's. But system is central to specula-

tive idealism. It cannot be the case that Marx's position is the reverse of Hegel's and that it rejects a central element in his thought. If that were the case, then Marx's theory would be dependent on at most a specific element in Hegel's. Fourth, Marx's own theory is itself systematic. It is, then, inaccurate to claim that it retains a version of the Hegelian conception of dialectic while rejecting his so-called systematizing tendencies. Fifth, in view of Hegel's critique of Kant,¹⁶⁰ it is difficult to claim that he had or could have had a method. Hegel's critique of Kant rests on the point that method cannot be isolated from content, but the critical philosophy bases itself on this presupposition.

The remarks of neo-Hegelianism are intended to reveal a connection with irrationalism. Lukács criticizes the description of Hegel's theory as the consummation of Kant's,¹⁶¹ as well as the emphasis on the unitary character of German idealism.¹⁶² He objects to the efforts of neo-Hegelians such as Richard Kroner and Hermann Glockner to synthesize opposites.¹⁶³ In blurring the distinctions between subjective and objective idealism,¹⁶⁴ the neo-Hegelians misunderstand Hegel and contribute to the victory of the most extreme irrationalist "vitalism," namely National Socialist philosophy.¹⁶⁵ But it doubtful that National Socialist thought can fairly be considered as continuous with or an extension of vitalism, for instance, as represented by Dilthey's position.

Lukács's remarks on German neo-Hegelianism conclude his direct consideration of German philosophy. Turning now to German sociology of what Marxists since Lenin call the imperialist period,¹⁶⁶ he notes that sociology arose as an independent discipline after the decline of classical political economy. The hallmark of this new discipline is its noneconomic approach to social questions. "Sociology as an independent discipline came about in such a way that its treatment of a social problem did not consider the economic basis; the supposed independence of social questions from economic ones formed the methodological starting-point of

sociology."¹⁶⁷ In fact, sociology was intended as a replacement, grounded in natural science, for political economy. "Certainly it is true to say that initially, sociology also claimed to be a universal science of society (Comte, Herbert, Spencer). For that reason it was trying to find a basis in natural science that would replace an economic basis."¹⁶⁸

Lukács stresses the manner in which forms of sociology that fail to consider the economic dimension of society also fail to understand the social context in remarks on Ferdinand Toennies, Max Weber and Albert Weber, Karl Mannheim and Hans Freyer. It is correct that sociology arose after the disintegration of classical economic theory, but it does not follow that sociologists in general are unaware of, or uninterested in, economic analysis. Beginning with Max Weber, there are many counterexamples of sociologists concerned to integrate sociological theory with economic theory.¹⁶⁹

Lukács was personally acquainted with and influenced by Max Weber. Not surprisingly, his comments on Max Weber's theory are insightful, but also typical of his rigid form of Marxism in this period. He suggests that Max Weber objected to historical materialism because it demonstrated the priority of the economic factor.¹⁷⁰ Now carefully distancing himself from his earlier reliance on Weber, he suggests that the latter substituted a noneconomic for an economic analysis of capitalism. "In contrast to the earlier view of capitalism as any accumulation of wealth, Weber was at pains to grasp the specific character of modern capitalism and to relate its European origin to the difference between ethico-religious development in the East and West. To achieve this his principal step was to de-economize and 'spiritualize' the nature of capitalism. This he presented as a rationalizing of socio-economic life, the rational calculability of all phenomena."¹⁷¹

Weber was anything but an irrational thinker. But for Lukács, who accepts the priority of economic factors, it is finally irrational to propose a noneconomically reductive form of analysis. Lukács

suggests that through his emphasis on religious factors, on value-free sociology,¹⁷² on the concept of the charismatic leader, and so on,¹⁷³ Weber unconsciously opened the door to irrationalism.¹⁷⁴ It is possible, as Lukács suggests, that Weber influenced some writers inclined to irrationalism or even fascism. But as any reader of Weber's work knows, he was not interested in substituting a non-economic analysis for an economic perspective. Rather, he was concerned to supplement an economic vision through a discussion of other, noneconomic factors.¹⁷⁵

The final chapter on social Darwinism, racial theory and fascism, argues strongly for a conclusion hinted at throughout this long book: the defense or the destruction of reason is not a mere academic alternative of interest to the scholar; it rather concerns the nature of problems that arise within life and only later penetrate into philosophy, but which finally bear on the struggle between socialism and monopoly capitalism. "But we have tried to show how all such problems, even the most abstract, grow out of the life of society and become important factors in its development. There is no recognition of past events that is fruitful for the present without a perspective on the future; and no concrete national perspective on the future without an accurately illuminated past."¹⁷⁶

This conclusion rests on the identification of a continuous development. On the one hand, there are the biological theories of racial inferiority and racial superiority stated by Arthur Gobineau and H. S. Chamberlain and restated as integral parts of National Socialist ideology. This is a link that few observers would contest. On the other hand, there is the more difficult claim for continuity between subjective idealism, beginning with the middle Schelling, and the racial ideologues named here. According to Lukács, the return to classical German philosophy included a tendency to appropriate its most reactionary sides. "Thus Kant was thoroughly 'purged' of his wavering between materialism and idealism

(Lenin); thus Rickert's reactionary neo-Kantian school exploited the later Fichte's irrationalism to extend neo-Kantianism; thus Eduard von Hartmann revived the later Schelling's philosophy, whose reactionary character was expressed more strongly and effectively still in the subsequent influence of Kierkegaard. Thus neo-Hegelianism used Hegel's reconciliation with the reality of Prussia to turn him into a precursor of Bismarck and to expand his philosophy in general—thoroughly 'purged' of all dialectics—into that of conserving German backwardness, into a synthesis of all reactionary trends. Then there were the thinkers whose basic tendencies were reactionary from the start, such as Schopenhauer, the Romantics (chiefly Adam Müller, Görres, etc.) and Nietzsche. Fascism, inheriting the collective legacy of Germany's reactionary development, used it in order to establish a bestial imperialism in home and foreign affairs.¹⁷⁷

This reading rests on the fragile link between a master thinker and his disciples. Obviously, a position does not interpret itself, nor does it determine its future reception. One cannot wholly distinguish between someone who creates an important body of thought and its later comprehension. Heidegger is an exception, since he actively sought to influence the way in which the link between his Nazism and his thought would be received.¹⁷⁸ But in general a master thinker does not determine the future reception of the position. Marx is no more responsible for Marxism, including the crimes committed in his name, than is Hegel for Hegelianism.

Lukács further argues for the rise of fascist ideology on its supposed basis in reactionary philosophy. He adduces three reasons for this claim. First, after Germany's defeat in World War I there was a general resentment of the imposed peace terms as well as a specific disappointment by the masses in the failure of the 1918 uprising.¹⁷⁹ Second, reactionary forces turned to Hitler and his colleagues who met the need to oppose socialism through a reaction-

ary ideology.¹⁸⁰ Third, Hitler's lack of concern with objective truth and opposition to objectivity was aided by the presence of an irrationalist tendency in German thought. "Now, however, these coarse and muscular advertising techniques joined forces with the products of imperialist vitalism, the philosophy of the most 'refined' minds of this period. For that agnosticist irrationalism which had gone on developing in Germany from Nietzsche, Dilthey and Simmel to Klages, Heidegger and Jaspers had as its final outcome a repudiation of objective truth no less vehement than that which Hitler voiced from other motives and with other arguments. Thus vitalist irrationalism's relevance to fascist 'philosophy' did not hang on individual epistemological findings; these, difficult and subtle, were only meant for small intellectual circles. It had to do with a general spiritual mood of radical doubt concerning the possibility of objective knowledge and the value of reason and understanding, as also with a blind faith in intuitive, irrational 'prophecies' contradicting reason and understanding. In short, it had to do with an atmosphere of hysterical, superstitious credulity whereby the obscurantism of the campaign against objective truth, reason and understanding appeared to be the last word in modern science and the 'most advanced' epistemology."¹⁸¹

It is difficult to doubt that the First World War had enormous social and cultural consequences in Germany. National Socialism was not and was not perceived as the expression of reactionary interests of a small group only, since Hitler unfortunately came to power through a popular vote. The causal link—if there is one—between the line of thought leading over the middle Schelling and Schopenhauer to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche on the one hand and Nazi ideology on the other is far from clear. Certainly, Nazi ideologists utilized German thought for their own purposes. But it does not therefore follow that the authors of the views often misappropriated, of whom Nietzsche is merely the best-known example, are enemies of reason or representatives of irrationalism. A theory is not irrational because it fails to follow a tendency, such

as Marxism, which Lukács presupposes as true, since it is surely possible to disagree rationally with Lukács; a theory is only irrational when it rejects reason. But as for Kant so for Lukács there is no way to offer a rational defense of the claim to a single possible view of reason. There is no rational argument that will show that there is one and only one possible view of reason.

Lukács favors the traditional philosophical claim for objective truth. But there is an important distinction between doubt concerning objective truth on the one hand and so-called blind faith in intuition, hysterical credulity, even irrationalism on the other. There is a further distinction between the very idea of objectivity and an analysis leading to objective truth. In the modern philosophical tradition, the main epistemological strategy underlying assertions of objective truth is foundationalism. At present the growing evidence for antifoundationalism and the increasingly clear signs of the inability to make out any form of foundationalism lend support to an argument for some form of epistemological relativism.¹² Conversely, it would be irrational to maintain the traditional philosophical notion of objective truth in the absence of a satisfactory justification. If foundationalism has failed, then it is indeed rational to abandon the traditional idea of objective truth in favor of a weaker view.

We can end this chapter with a brief comparative remark. Lukács's book on irrationalism is detailed and scholarly, but its philosophical interest mainly lies in offer perceptive comments on specific positions. In comparison, the shorter, more polemical work on existentialism is philosophically more interesting since the perspectives are contrasted and an argument for the superiority of Marxism is presented. Marxism's superiority is constantly presupposed in the discussion of irrationalism but never demonstrated. Accordingly, it functions as an unexamined presupposition whose dogmatic assumption tends to undermine the philosophical value of an often interesting work.

Lukács's Social Ontology

MARXISM SINCE ENGELS HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED two claims: a distinction in kind between itself and classical German philosophy, even philosophy as such; and a view of its absolute superiority over classical German philosophy. Lukács, who accepts these claims, innovates in his effort to demonstrate the absolute philosophical superiority of Marxism. His argument for the superiority of Marxism rests on a Marxist theory of reason. On the basis of the neo-Kantian distinction between rationality and irrationality, he develops a dualistic analysis of two incompatible points of view: Marxism as rational, and non-Marxism as irrational. The rationality of Marxism lies in its solution of the problem of knowledge and its politically progressive standpoint. The irrationality of non-Marxism is manifested in its inability to resolve the epistemological problems as well as in its politically reactionary nature. Its irrationality is visible in its opposition to social change and its role, in its degenerate form of subjective idealism, in the rise of National Socialist ideology.

The preceding chapters have studied the nature and later development of Lukács's argument for Marxist materialism and against idealism. The three main stages so far identified are correlated with his initial Marxist breakthrough to a supposedly orthodox,

but in fact unorthodox form of Marxism (*History and Class Consciousness*), his early Stalinist analysis of Hegel (*The Young Hegel*), and his later Stalinist studies of existentialism (*Existentialism or Marxist?*) and irrationalism (*The Destruction of Reason*). In the initial phase, he understands Marxism as the solution to the unresolved problems of classical German philosophy. The decisive difference between Marxism and classical German thought lies in Marxism's insight into political economy. In the second phase, he reformulates the distinction as a decisive insight into political economy. Hegel's comprehension of political economy is decisively limited by his inability to surmount the limits of the classical English approach. In the third phase, he further reformulates his argument in two ways. First, he asserts that the superiority of Marxism-Leninism lies in the epistemological virtues of a dialectical reflection theory of knowledge. Lukács here recinds his critique of the reflection theory. Second, in the discussion of irrationalism, he renders subjective idealism responsible for the rise of National Socialism.

Lukács is constantly concerned to demonstrate the intrinsic superiority of Marxism, or Marxism-Leninism, over non-Marxism, especially classical German philosophy. In his Marxism phase, the change in his position over time reflects less his basic insistence on Marxism as the only satisfactory solution to the problems of philosophy, particularly the question of knowledge, than the manner in which the argument is made. The evolution of Lukács's Marxism records different formulations of this same basic claim. The last stage of his position presents an exciting new form of Marxism, in which he finally softens, or relativizes what until now has been consistently depicted as a rigid dualism between Marxism and non-Marxism. The last stage of Lukács's argument is contained in a posthumously published study of ontology, the main item in the writings that Lukács left behind at his death, published under the title *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins* (*On the*

Ontology of Social Being).¹ This book constitutes a new, important dimension of Lukács's Marxism.

History and Class Consciousness has long been the most influential work of Lukács's Marxist period. It has exerted, and continues to exert, a major influence on later Marxist discussion. It is possible that his major contribution will later be seen to lie in the field of Marxist aesthetics. As a contribution to Marxist theory, his posthumously published study of ontology is certainly one of his most important Marxist texts. Ontology is one of the main philosophical themes in this century and Marx himself left no theory of ontology in his writings. In his Marxist period, prior to the final phase, Lukács was mainly concerned with aesthetics, epistemology, and politics from a Marxist perspective. In a new beginning, in his final phase he laid the foundations for a specifically Marxist theory of social ontology.

Lukács's study of ontology is only partly posthumous, since it appeared in piecemeal fashion during his lifetime; but as a whole the study remained unfinished when he died in June of 1971. According to the editor, this book is first mentioned in Lukács's correspondence in a letter written on September 19, 1964, less than seven years before his death.² It was originally intended as a prolegomena to a Marxist ethics that Lukács had intended to write after he finished his study of esthetics entitled *Eigenart des Ästhetischen*. The work on ethics, for which the discussion of ontology was meant as a preface, was never composed; but in the process of his work on this project its preface grew into a major study.³

The book is divided into three main parts, including a long prolegomena of 324 pages devoted to the principal themes of contemporary social ontology. The prolegomena, which ends the Hungarian edition, is placed first in the German version, on the grounds that the last portion of a study to be composed is its introduction.⁴ The body of the work is divided into eight lengthy chapters, including four historical chapters on the contemporary

problem (*Problémelage*) and four chapters on its most important themes. The entire study, which is enormously complex and equally long, runs to the almost fantastic length of 1457 pages. At present, only fragments of the book have been translated; in view of its length and an increasing lack of concern with this kind of thought, it is unlikely that the entire book will ever be available in English.

Lukács did not have time to finish preparing his manuscript for publication. But it was sufficiently close to being finished when he died for us to evaluate its significance and its place within his thought. This book represents a new stage in Lukács's position, which differs here as much from the long preceding Stalinist period as that phase differs from his initial, better-known breakthrough to Marxism. This study represents a new high point in Lukács's Marxist period because of its theme, its intrinsic quality, and its revised understanding of Marxism. For a variety of reasons, including its inordinate length and relative unavailability until recently, this book is not widely known and unlikely to become so rapidly, if at all. It is not even well known to Marxists, and only slightly better known to Lukács specialists.⁵ It will be useful to characterize this study of social ontology in a few broad strokes, a task which is perhaps most easily carried out against the background of Lukács's previous Marxist writings.

It is helpful to mention the difference between the study as a whole and its prolegomena. The prolegomena, the last thing Lukács wrote, differs significantly from the remainder of the study. Although the prolegomena forms an integral part of the book as a whole, its origin is strictly occasional. According to the editor, it was written only in order to answer the criticism addressed by friends and students to other parts of the work. The result is a gigantic résumé of a study that Lukács was unable to complete, and that perhaps could not be completed.⁶ The editor correctly suggests that the prolegomena differs from the rest of the

book in its avoidance of the rigid dualism characteristic of its historical and systematic parts.⁷ It further exhibits an increased freedom from Marxist orthodoxy, for instance in a salutary tendency, unprecedented in Lukács's earlier Marxist writings, to criticize all the main figures of classical Marxism including Lenin.⁸

The ordinary difficulty of describing an important philosophical work is only compounded by the bewildering number of themes Lukács takes up in this long work. Obviously, the different stages of Lukács's Marxism reflect important changes in the course of a varied and complex intellectual itinerary extending over more than six decades, from his conversion to Marxism at the end of 1918 to his death in 1971. As in the thought of any significant thinker, there is also an important element of continuity in Lukács's position, including in his Marxism. A persistent theme is a steady preoccupation with Marxist orthodoxy in *History and Class Consciousness* and in all later writings. His comprehension of orthodox Marxism varied as he traversed his different Marxist periods, but his commitment to the principle of orthodoxy remained invariant. In his last Marxist period, many elements in Lukács's understanding of Marxism change. Perhaps the most important change is a silent, but significant move away from Marxist orthodoxy.

At the end of his long career, Lukács returns to many of the themes earlier treated in his initial Marxist phase in a discussion that is no longer orthodox in any recognizable sense. If orthodoxy is the criterion of value, it is fair to say that Lukács's final Marxist perspective is at least unorthodox and perhaps even heretical. His move away from any form of Marxist orthodoxy in his last phase results in a singularly free form of Marxism that clearly violates a series of Marxist dogmas he had earlier sought to respect.

Among these dogmas, three are particularly important for all his earlier views of Marxism. They include a tendency to accord decisive philosophical weight to the views of Marxists whose qual-

ifications are mainly, or only, political; a further tendency routinely to dismiss non-Marxist thinkers merely for this reason; and a still further tendency to defend uncritically the Marxist dogma that Marx's contribution is principally or even wholly economic in character. Each of these tendencies belongs to the orthodox defense of Marxism through the attempted disqualification of non-Marxism.

In abandoning these features of his Marxist approach, Lukács literally transforms his ability to comprehend Marx, Marxism, and non-Marxist philosophy. It would be an error to exaggerate the difference between earlier and later phases of Lukács's Marxism, which exhibits strong elements of continuity; but it is not too much to say that the silent abandonment of Marxist orthodoxy in his last phase results in a sea change in his understanding of the relation of Marx and Marxism to German idealism.

Lukács routinely cites classical Marxist works as a source of authority throughout his Marxist period. In his study of ontology there is a clear change in his utilization of the main Marxist texts. In writings later than *History and Class Consciousness* he routinely accorded philosophical weight to statements by Marxists without standard philosophical credentials, including even Stalin. The study of social ontology exhibits a respectful but often critical attitude toward classical Marxist thinkers. Lukács is particularly critical of Stalin and Stalinist writers, whom he consistently takes to task on a large number of philosophical and political grounds. Clearly, he maintains his philosophical commitment to Marxism; but equally clearly he no longer feels the need to buttress his own opinions with quotations from the Marxist classics or to support any and all views expressed by the political leaders of the Marxist movement.

Up until this point, Lukács's Marxism has followed the Marxist dogma of a difference in kind between Marxism and other types of theory. Adherence to this view obviously impedes, even pre-

vents the acceptance of any non-Marxist insight, since in principle it falls and must fall below the Marxist level. This standpoint, which in principle prevented him from recognizing the permanent contribution of any non-Marxist thinker, is literally swept away in his study of ontology. The development of a critical attitude toward the main figures of Marxist orthodoxy transforms his capacity not only to appreciate, but even to accept the value of non-Marxist views.

An example of his change in attitude toward non-Marxists is his treatment of Hegel. Lukács is one of the important Hegel scholars from any perspective. Hegel's thought is a constant theme present throughout his Marxist period. In discussion prior to the ontology, he constantly criticized Hegelian idealism as such from the perspective of the supposed distinction between materialism and idealism. In the long treatise on ontology, this distinction is scarcely mentioned. It is even more noteworthy that in the first part of this study Lukács devotes a long, highly appreciative chapter to an obviously non-Marxist thinker, Nicolai Hartmann. According to Lukács, who momentarily seems to forget Hegel, Hartmann is the only non-Marxist to have a positive view of dialectic.⁹

The alteration in Lukács's capacity to appreciate non-Marxist thought is further reflected in his interpretation of the relation, traditionally crucial to Marxism's self-understanding, between Marx and Hegel. In previous Marxist writings, he accepted the standard Marxist view of Marx's theory as the inversion of Hegel's. His prior Marxist writings exhibit two main readings of the difference between them: an earlier, wider interpretation of the difference as methodological (*History and Class Consciousness*), leaving open the question of whether Marxism differs from classical German philosophy on philosophical grounds or through attention to the economic component of social reality; and a later, narrower interpretation, in effect a restatement of Engels's view, resting on the decisive distinction between idealism and material-

ism, presumably in terms of economic insight. Common to these two readings of the relation is the conviction of a fundamental change between Marx's position and preceding philosophy.

The comprehension of Marx's relation to Hegel through a basic change is ambiguous. It is compatible with the traditional Marxist claim for a break between classical German philosophy and Marx; and it is compatible as well with an insistence on the essential continuity underlying the conceptual novelty between different positions within a single philosophical tradition. Important philosophical theories, often separated by basic differences, belong to a single ongoing philosophical discussion. The latter, quasi-Hegelian reading of the relation is a main theme in Lukács's early Marxist depiction of Marx's theory as offering the solution to the unresolved problems of classical German philosophy. In the study of ontology, he now returns from the later idea of a conceptual rupture between Marx and Hegel to his earlier conception of continuity through development. He now maintains that we need not understand Marx's thought as representing a radical break with the prior philosophical tradition; rather, we can comprehend it, as Lenin suggests—perhaps in an unconscious echo of Hegel's approach to the history of philosophy—as preserving in itself all that is of value in preceding philosophy but going further than prior thinkers. "The recollection of the most significant predecessors seems to us to be useful, because in this way the significance of Marxism is not limited to its radical break with limited metaphysical and idealistic tendencies of bourgeois philosophy, as reported in the Stalin-Zhdanov period. On the contrary, to employ Lenin's term, it is that Marxism appropriates and transforms everything of value in the more than two thousand year old development of human thought and human culture."¹⁰

This passage identifies a clear difference between two different, incompatible views of Marxism: First, there is an approach, here associated with Stalinism, to Marxism as *sui generis* and unrelated

to bourgeois philosophy, which it has simply discarded. Second, there is a different, incompatible approach—with clearly Hegelian roots, but here attributed to Lenin—to Marxism as taking up into itself and as further developing all that is positive in preceding thought. Obviously, these two views of Marxism cannot be reconciled. Either Marxism breaks cleanly with prior philosophy, which it leaves behind; or Marxism further develops the positive contribution of previous philosophy. But it cannot do both.

A further difference lies in the move in this study, for the first time in Lukács's Marxist period, away from a strongly economic reading of Marx's thought. The economic reading of Marx's view has been a main element of Marxism since Engels. In *History and Class Consciousness* Lukács argued that Marx's methodological difference from classical German philosophy consisted in commodity-analysis. He later maintained that Marxism's decisive difference is less the concern with political economy as such than its specific comprehension of economic phenomena. If attention to political economy, or a particular conception of such phenomena is decisive, then by inference Marx only finally becomes a mature thinker when he leaves behind his youthful interest in philosophy. This conclusion was never drawn by Lukács or Marx. But it was drawn by Althusser and has led to a spirited discussion in the secondary literature.¹¹

Perhaps with Althusser in mind, Lukács now reacts against even the possibility that Marx's thought is discontinuous in an affirmation of its unity over time. His refutation consists of two points. First, he affirms the so-called continuity thesis, that is, the claim of the continuity of Marx's view throughout his career, through the denial that Marx ever renounced his earlier views in his later writings.¹² Second, he returns to the concept of alienation, which was a central theme in his initial Marxist phase. As part of the effort to argue for the difference in kind between Marxian, or Marxist, materialism and German idealism, it has been suggested that after the

"Paris Manuscripts" Marx leaves this concept behind. In a lengthy chapter that closes his treatise on social ontology, Lukács refutes this reading of Marx's position.¹³

Even from these brief comments, it is obvious that the discussion of ontology represents an important new stage in Lukács's Marxism. It is now necessary to characterize the aim of the book. As a first approach, we can refer to Lukács's remarks in a series of interviews in the weeks before his death, in part reproduced in the afterword to his study of social ontology.¹⁴ Two statements attributed to Lukács provide a lucid, but simple access to his complex Marxian theory of ontology.

Responding to an invitation to comment on his last work, Lukács states: "Following Marx, I imagine ontology as the real philosophy based on history. Now it is historically not doubtful that inorganic being is first, and from it—how we don't know, but we know approximately when—organic being emerges, and precisely in its plant and animal forms. And from this biological situation, through an enormous number of transitions, emerges what we designate as human social being, whose essence is the teleological positing of man, that is, work. That is the most decisive new category, which includes everything within itself."¹⁵ Reacting to a further invitation to specify the extent to which Marx himself had developed this thesis, he states: "Above all Marx worked out, and I hold that for the most important part of the Marxian theory, that every being is historical. In the 'Paris Manuscripts,' Marx says that there is only one science, namely history, and he adds: 'A non-objective essence is a non-essence.' That means, a fact which has no categorial properties cannot exist. Hence, existence means that every category is exemplified in the objectivity of a definitive form, to which the respective essence belongs. Here ontology is sharply separated from the old philosophy."¹⁶

These two statements provide a clear indication of his intention in this work. Lukács's general aim is to base himself on Marx's

position, especially Marx's early thought, in order to develop the elements of an ontology of social being. Ostensibly following Marx, he regards ontology as the form of philosophy, differing from other philosophical theories, that follows from a comprehension of history. A Marxian social ontology differs from the old philosophy through its philosophical novelty, not through its renunciation of philosophy as such.¹⁷ A conception of human history from an ontological perspective presupposes a triple distinction between inorganic being, which precedes and hence underlies organic being, organic being, for instance in its animal and plant forms, and finally social or human being.

Lukács believes that the essence of human social being lies in teleological positing (*teleologische Setzung*), a term he constantly employs throughout this long book without ever reflecting upon it.¹⁸ As used here, the term has obvious associations with earlier positions in the history of philosophy, including Plato's view that a workman, say a carpenter, requires an idea of what he makes in order to make it, Fichte's concept of positing (*setzen*), and the concept of intentionality prominent in phenomenology. For Lukács, work (*Arbeit*) is the defining characteristic of human being, since we precede our activity with an idea of what we intend to accomplish. This view of human being is meant as an alternative to other theories of men and women as social beings, beings who speak, and the more recent view of *Dasein* as concerned with Being, and so on.¹⁹

The category of work, which only emerges in the recent philosophical tradition, is centrally important as the basis for all other social categories. This conception is anticipated by other writers, particularly Aristotle and Hegel. Lukács maintains, with an eye to the categorial approach to social being or the social world, that the Marxian notion of work constitutes a concrete rethinking of what for Hegel is still an abstract concept. The general categorial approach to reality is at least as old as Aristotle. It differs from

classical German philosophy through a realist stress on the immanence of the category as present in the mind of the observer and functioning as well within the social context.²⁰ Things do not change in and of themselves; rather, they change as the result of conscious positing in which the result corresponds to the aim. We can understand human society through the notion of teleological positing, more precisely as following from the effort to achieve value through goal-directed activity.

It responding to the question about the Marxian roots of social ontology, Lukács innovates in three important respects. To begin with, reference to the most important part of the Marxian theory (*Marxschen Theorie*) simply unravels the fundamental Marxist dogma of the seamless web linking Marx and Marxism. Marxists of the most diverse persuasions—like Kantians and perhaps all other disciples of master thinkers, writers who agree on virtually no other doctrinal point—are united in the conviction that their own views, whether compatible, incompatible, or partially compatible, preserve the essence of Marx's thought. Lukács accepted the Marxist view of the essential continuity between Marx and Marxism even in *History and Class Consciousness*, in his defense of Marxist orthodoxy against Engels.

To the best of my knowledge Lukács never admitted the distinction between Marx and Marxism in his prior Marxist writings. But he does so here. In his allusion to Marx's thought in this crucial passage, Lukács tacitly suggests that there is a difference between the views of Marx and Marxism. In his suggestion that Marx's position is a separate conceptual entity that deserves pride of place he implies that it ought not to be conflated with Marxism. In this way, he challenges a fundamental element of official Marxism; and he further undermines a main component of his own earlier form of Marxist faith.

Second, in stating that Marx had above all worked out that the basic category of social being resides in its historical character,

Lukács indicates his intention, in his own social ontology, to go beyond the letter of Marx's theory by elaborating it according to its spirit. Marx's position is not fully complete, but requires additional development. The criterion of acceptable theory is no longer mere allegiance to a view, such as Marx's theory. For Lukács, in this study even Marx's thought is finally interesting insofar as it contains the resources necessary to permit the development of a social ontology toward which Marx only pointed.

Third, there is a new interpretation of Marx's central insight, which Lukács intends to develop in contradistinction to the old philosophy. In Marxism since Engels it is usual to insist on Marxism's insight into political economy as its defining characteristic. In Lukács's previous writings, Marx's specific contribution has been variously identified for instance only in *History and Class Consciousness* as: commodity-analysis, methodology, the perspective of totality, the proletarian standpoint, and the substitution of praxis for philosophical theory. As late as the work on reason (*The Destruction of Reason*), Marx's decisive insight is depicted as the rejection of an idealistic concern with system in favor of a materialistic interpretation of dialectic. In simpler language, this is a version of the Marxist claim that Marx's position is the reverse of Hegel's.

It is difficult to reconcile the different readings of Marx's basic contribution. They are not the expression of the same, similar, or even compatible claims in different terminology. But they share, even if they do not always express, the traditional Marxist insight, formulated in Lukács's writings in different ways, of the crucial significance of Marx's understanding of political economy. This aspect is stressed early in the mention of commodity-analysis, again in the transcendence of bourgeois political economy, and later in the rejection of Max Weber's appeal to noneconomic factors. In his identification of history as Marx's basic insight, Lukács does more than offer yet another reading of the position. Al-

though he does not abandon, or depreciate the importance of the economic factor, he now embeds it in a wider framework: the historical character of social being. His revised understanding of Marx's theory enables him to develop a richer, nonreductive analysis, which comprehends the politico-economic dimension within the wider social process.²¹ In this way, at the close of his career Lukács returns to his early quasi-Spinozistic understanding of thought and existence as different aspects of the same process, now identified as historical.²² He further attributes to, or rather discovers in, Marx's thought the highly contemporary thesis that ontology is grounded in history. It hardly needs stressing that an analogous thesis is elaborated in rather different fashion by Heidegger as the basis of his fundamental ontology.²³

Lukács bases his reading of Marx's position as a new philosophy based on history by pointing to a passage in the "Paris Manuscripts." Here Marx remarks that the only science is history and further remarks that a nonobjective essence is a nonessence. Lukács clearly means to endorse the Marxian view that all sciences ultimately derive from and depend upon the science of history. Lukács understands "historical science" to mean "the categorical interpretation of social being in terms of work, or teleological activity, from a temporal perspective."

His interpretation of Marx's statement on essence as requiring objectivity, or objective existence, allows him to insist on the immanence of the categories employed to interpret social reality within social reality. In this way, Lukács implicitly connects categorical immanence to a realist perspective, which he now regards as decisively different from earlier forms of ontology. Significantly, this point is now argued through the basic realism of the Marxian perspective, and not, as in his earlier writings, in terms of the difference of materialism from idealism, or of proletarian from bourgeois thought. In the same way, Lukács is careful not to claim that the historical perspective as such is unprecedented. He acknowl-

edges that some earlier categorial systems also contained historical categories. The relevant difference lies in Marxism's insight that history is the history of categorial change. It follows, as Marx stresses, that even the categories undergo change through time.²⁴

If everything that exists is categorial, obviously nothing can exist that is not a category. According to Lukács, in this way Marxism differs from older philosophies that regard being as the basic category within which the categories of being arise. Lukács refers to an example taken from Leibniz, but he does not identify the older thinkers whom he has in mind. Clearly, one such thinker is Hegel. We recall that Hegel derives the categories of reality precisely from the general but ahistorical concept of being, in which he includes historical categories as well.

This reference enables us to focus Lukács's claim for the originality of the Marxist view against its background in classical German thought, above all Hegelian idealism. He is not asserting that the Marxian, or Marxist, angle of vision differs in its attention to history as such from a categorial perspective. Rather, materialism differs from idealism in its resolute extension of the historical dimension to the categorial framework itself. The categorial framework is no longer an invariant conceptual network prior to and independent of the object of knowledge, for instance in a Kantian or even in a Fichtean sense; on the contrary, the mutable framework is immanent within the object. In sum, closely following Marx on this point, in Lukács's interpretation of the Marxian turn to history the categorial approach to knowledge exemplified in classical German thought takes on a new, historically relative form, in a new type of historical realism.

In his preceding writings, Lukács typically develops his systematic ideas through detailed discussion of different views in the history of philosophy. This practice is followed here. In earlier writings, the conviction that Marxism as the truth differed in kind from non-Marxism meant that non-Marxism could not be true as

such; it was true at all only and to the extent that it contributed to the rise of Marxism. It would be incorrect to suggest that Lukács has entirely abandoned this perspective, since there is still much partisan discussion of Marxism as better, or intrinsically better, than non-Marxism. But in general the most impressive aspect of Lukács's relativization of the difference between reason and unreason lies in his newly found capacity to provide an insightful, frequently sympathetic discussion of non-Marxist thought.

Lukács's increased sensitivity to prior thought is visible in his accounts of the views of Nicolai Hartmann, Hegel and Marx. In his long study of ontology, the two main examples of his treatment of non-Marxist thought are the discussions of Hartmann and Hegel. In view of Lukács's earlier rejection of non-Marxism as such, even his choice of the title of his chapter on Hartmann as "Nikolai Hartmann's Push toward a Genuine Ontology" is significant.²⁵ Obviously, in his qualification of Hartmann's view as a step toward an authentic ontology, Lukács has silently dropped the class perspective, or standpoint of the proletariat, that he earlier advanced as a principal criterion of philosophical truth in *History and Class Consciousness*.

The analysis of Hartmann's ontology is divided into two sections including a description of its basic principles followed by a critical evaluation. Lukács is above all impressed by Hartmann's effort to construct an ontological theory. He maintains that since Hartmann's theory is immanent, it avoids any theological overtones and further resists the tendency to transform ontology into epistemology.²⁶ Hartmann's ontology is most novel in its attention to the elaboration of a categorical framework.²⁷ But his approach is doubly deficient: it fails to contribute to social ontology, of which it has a confused understanding at best,²⁸ and it exhibits no real grasp of the dialectic.²⁹

Lukács's discussion of Hegel within this book is doubly important: as the final chapter in an extended discussion of Hegel's

thought running throughout his entire Marxist period; and as an integral part of his effort to elaborate a social ontology from a Marxian angle of vision. Except for Marx, Lukács's remarks here on Hegel are more detailed than those on any other philosopher. The near monograph length of his Hegel chapter led to its appearance as a separate work, but his treatment of Hegel in this book is severely condensed.

His stress on Hegel's importance for the understanding of Marx continues to restrict his capacity to appreciate Hegelian idealism. His reading of Hegel still suffers from his acceptance of the Marxist view of Marx's materialist theory as the inversion of Hegel's idealism, whose importance, hence, lies in its contribution to the constitution of a radically different, opposing view. His analysis of Hegel combines an increased sensitivity to non-Marxism and an orthodox Marxist reading of Hegel's thought. His residual orthodoxy is evident in various ways, particularly in the rapid recourse to Marx and Marxism in order to criticize, or even to describe, Hegel's position. The impressive but also curious result is a discussion of Hegel's philosophy that reflects considerable insight into the position, an increased openness to Hegelian idealism, as well as a greater residual orthodoxy than elsewhere in the work on ontology.

Lukács's Hegel analysis in his ontology is reminiscent of *History and Class Consciousness*. We recall his quasi-Kantian effort in the reification essay to identify antinomies of classical German thought arising from a supposed inability to understand the real subject of history. In his turn to ontology, Lukács is no longer interested in proving the antinomic character of classical German philosophy as such; but he is still interested in proving the antinomic character of Hegel's position.

He discusses Hegel's thought under the heading of Hegel's false and genuine ontologies (*Hegels falsche und echte Ontologie*).³⁰ Hegel is the first thinker since Heraclitus to regard the concept of

contradiction as the ultimate ontological principle.³¹ But as the Marxists quickly saw, Hegel only seemingly united reason and reality in his thought. In support of this assertion, Lukács points to Hegel's panlogism. If we are to rely on Hegel's thought today, we can do so only by going further on the path already trodden by the classical Marxist thinkers. Adopting an unfortunate phrase, that Marx applied to Ricardo, Lukács insists on the need to acknowledge that the novelty in Hegel's position appears in the midst of the dung of contradictions (*Dünger der Widersprüche*).³²

This unusual, even harsh terminology is not intended in a summary sense. As in his prior writings, in many ways Lukács here continues to propose a strongly positive reading of Hegel's thought. The significance of Hegel's analysis of the contradictory nature of the present situation is acknowledged. "This dung of contradictions' appears in Hegel to begin with as the knowledge of the contradictory nature of the present, as the problem not only of thought, but also as that of reality itself, as a primarily ontological problem, which carries far beyond the present day, and as its basis for every rational thought concerning this."³³ Hegel offers a grasp of the present as the result of a dialectical social process, which is itself grounded in the dialectical process of inorganic nature. This insight is praised as "the first union of the dialectical results and real historicity."³⁴ The result is a profound grasp of the present as a moment in a larger process whose other dimensions are the past and the future.

The idea of contradiction, the basis of Hegel's attempt to grasp the real world, is the source of the main weakness in Hegel's thought. His logic is intrinsically antinomic because of the multiple strains created by the simultaneous presence within it, unknown to Hegel, of two different and incompatible ontologies.³⁵ One of these is a supposedly false ontology that is exhibited by that strand of Hegel's position that Lukács rejects. He describes Hegel's false ontology as the view in which the authentic ontologi-

cal relations initially receive their appropriate conceptual expression in the form of logical categories. The other is the supposedly true ontological view in which the logical categories are not understood as pure moments of thought but as the dynamic constituents of the essential movement of reality itself. "On the one hand, in Hegel the genuine ontological relations receive their appropriate expression first in the form of logical categories; on the other hand, the logical categories are not, hence, conceived as pure thought determinations, but must be understood as dynamic constituents of the essential movement of reality itself, as steps, as stages on the way to the self-attainment of spirit. Therefore, the principal antinomies, which so far have shown themselves and below will show themselves, arise from the clash of two ontologies, which are present unrecognized and which work against each other in many ways."³⁶

His objection to the unresolved dualism in Hegel's thought is a significant innovation. His earlier efforts to grasp Marx's theory through Hegel's often rested on some form of inversion. In *The Young Hegel*, following Marx's remarks on the *Phenomenology* in the "Paris Manuscripts," he maintained that Hegel incorrectly begins from thought whereas Marx correctly begins from the social context. But the relation of Marx to Hegel is more complicated than Marxists, presumably himself as well, had previously understood.³⁷ In earlier writings, Lukács had understood this relation as a simple inversion. He maintained that Hegel's position contains two incompatible views: the type of approach previously rejected from a Marxist angle of vision, in which categories are prior to being; and a theory of immanently developing categories arising out of being, now ascribed to Marx.

Lukács's Hegel critique is consistent with his present emphasis on the role of concrete categories in Marx's theory. If Marx's position is the reverse of Hegel's, and Hegel's position contains two incompatible ontologies, one of which is false and one of which is

true, then Marx's view can conveniently be depicted as a consistent form of Hegel's. Marx's theory not only emerges out of Hegel's, it further overcomes the intrinsic contradiction of speculative idealism. The limitation of Hegel's thought no longer lies in its idealistic character, or even its mythological conception of the identical subject-object; its limitation lies in its unresolved dualism.

Lukács's Hegel critique again invokes the traditional Marxist insistence on being as prior to thought, in this case in the form of a realist theory of social being. He continually maintains throughout this work that it is mistaken in principle to subordinate being of any kind to thought about being. Lukács now supposes that despite his best efforts Hegel fails to present a unitary vision; Hegelian idealism is finally dualistic. It is well known that Hegel stressed monism and criticized others, for instance Kant,³¹ for an inability to overcome dualism. In now raising the specter of dualism against Hegel, Lukács evaluates Hegel by the same standard that Hegel employed to evaluate others.

From his realist perspective, Lukács rejects the first Hegelian ontology but accepts the second. He relies on what he discerns as the second Hegelian ontology now to explain the relation of Marx to Hegel and to serve as the basis for the elaboration of his own social ontology. In imitation of Engels's classical Marxist separation of all of modern philosophy into two options, in his earlier analysis of the relation of Marx to Hegel, Lukács tended to operate with a simple, perhaps simplistic, exclusive dichotomy between materialism and idealism. He now proposes that both ontological views are located within Hegel's own position as alternative answers to Hegel's basic problem of how to realize the realm of reason within the postrevolutionary world.³² The result is to transport the old distinction between idealism and materialism, the basis of classical Marxism, within Hegel's position. As both idealism and materialism, Hegel's theory is neither one nor the other;

but it is still the basis for Marx's transformation of prior philosophy into his own position.

His new, dualistic reading of Hegel's ontology undermines his continued reference to Hegel, here and elsewhere, as an idealist. If both idealist and materialist, or realist, ontologies cohabit, or cohabit silently within Hegel's thought, the familiar Marxist critique of Hegel as an idealist from the materialist perspective is no longer valid. It follows that the supposed reversal of Hegel's thought in Marx's position cannot be a simple inversion; it is rather Marx's rejection of one strand in Hegel's thought in favor of another. The result is to rehabilitate speculative idealism. If Hegel's theory is not false, it does not require an inversion in order to be true. Since it is problematic because of the admixture of true and false elements, it is necessary that the husk be stripped away so to speak, in order to expose the valid kernel. There is, then, a direct continuity between Lukács's development of a social ontology, Marx's position on which it is based, and the roots of Marx's thought in Hegel's theory. Lukács's Marxian social ontology does not break with, but carries further Hegel's thought.

In his tacit decision to give up the distinction between materialism and idealism, at least as usually drawn, Lukács moves backwards from Marxism, for which the distinction is a basic dogma, toward Marx, for whom it is insignificant. As could be expected, he does not weaken his claim for the superiority of Marx's vantage point. Not surprisingly, he continues to insist on the significance of the difference between Marx and Hegel as of fundamental importance for his reading of Hegel as well as for his own ontological task. "The following considerations on Hegel are based on Marx. The development of his ontology, above all that of social being, better serves to illuminate the positions of both great thinkers in intimate dependency and qualitative difference, even opposition."⁴⁰

Lukács's increased sensitivity here to non-Marxism is accom-

panied by a new awareness of Marx's position. As Lukács now reads Marx's thought, Marx's critique of Hegel is ontological; Marx's theory is fundamentally an ontological view in which he comprehends human being in terms of human practice (*Praxis*).⁴¹ Beginning in his earliest writings Marx's new theory of ontology arose through a double relation to Hegel's view: the critique of Hegelian logicism; and the further elaboration of the Hegelian view of social being as a historical process,⁴² with particular attention to the ontologically basic role of the economic dimension of social reality.⁴³ There is, then, a parallel between Marx's rejection of one strand of Hegel's position for another and Lukács's similar objection to the unresolved dualism of speculative idealism. His interpretations of Marx and of Hegel suppose the same dualism in Hegel's thought.

His analysis of Marx's thought here has several new features. These include a revised reading of Hegel's position and hence of Marx's relation to it, and the attention to the ontological nature of Marx's thought. It is well known that Lenin insisted that most Marxists failed to comprehend Marx since they were unfamiliar with Hegel, particularly with his *Logic*. Similarly, Lukács now strongly insists that since Lenin Marxism has mainly lost sight of the authentic nature of Marx's ontology. The main task at present is to call attention to the true nature of Marx's view, not only for its own sake, but above all in order to facilitate the development of human being in a manner dependent neither on theology nor on other forms of utopian thought. "This digression was necessary in order to show that today the task of Marxists can only be to reawaken the genuine Marxian ontology, above all with its help to make scientifically possible not only a historically true analysis of the historical development since Marx's death, which today is as good as entirely lacking, but also in order to grasp and to expound being as a whole, in Marx's sense, as fundamentally a historically (irreversible) process. Only in this way can this theory

recover the practical pathos remaining beyond the earthly-immanent, which it has in Marx and which later, in partial abstraction from Lenin's intermediate position, theoretically as well as practically to the greatest extent disappeared."⁴⁴

This passage is interesting for two reasons. First, it stresses Marx's contribution to philosophy, not to world revolution. After the fateful collapse of official Marxism in Eastern Europe, it is too late to insist on Marxism as revolutionary socialism but not too early to insist on the philosophical content of Marx's thought often covered up by its political reading. Lukács can be said to anticipate the necessary shift from Marxist politics to Marxian philosophy. Second, Lukács tempers his newly discovered approach to Marx as a philosopher in the continued insistence on a Marxist approach to his thought. The comment on Lenin is remarkable in view of his stature in orthodox Marxism, and Lukács's realignment of his own Marxism on Lenin's interpretation shortly after the appearance of *History and Class Consciousness*. In suggesting that Lenin's view is not definitive, he points to the need for critical evaluation of even the most important Marxist authority figure. In this way, he recovers a relative freedom of thought rarely evident since his initial breakthrough to Marxism.

He identifies three elements required to reawaken the authentic Marxian ontology at this time.⁴⁵ First, we need a fundamental critique of contemporary bourgeois ideology, particularly in relation to neopositivism. Second, and as a precondition, we require a basic critique of the Stalinist view of Marxism. Lukács here publicly takes his leave of a political perspective that continually affected his philosophical texts after his initial Marxist work. Third, as is clear from his comments on Hegel, we must provide a study of the Hegelian residue in Marxism.

Lukács is also for the first time timidly critical of Marx. Marxism has traditionally insisted on Marx's theory as *sui generis*, as basically unlike, hence incomparable with, any other. At this point

in his evolution Lukács has not diminished his commitment to Marxism, or his belief that it is so to speak the only way; and his terminology is still Marxist. But his present commitment is tempered by a more realistic view of Marx, by an acknowledgment that Marx's position does not put an end to philosophy. Despite its novel features, it is merely another theory in the philosophical tradition, in terms of which it requires evaluation. In this way, Lukács moves toward the standard approach to philosophy. It is usual to argue for the comparative advantage of a given approach over its alternatives. So in his final work Lukács makes a similar argument on behalf of Marx's ontological perspective.

This series of brief remarks is not intended to be a complete description of Lukács's study of ontology, even an outline. Nonetheless, these remarks suffice to evaluate the role of Lukács's final phase in his argument for Marxism and against non-Marxism in his development of a Marxist view of reason. Marxism largely arose through its rejection of what it regards as bourgeois thought. In writings prior to his final period, Lukács follows the traditional Marxist claim for a difference in kind, not in degree, between Marxism and non-Marxism. He expresses this claim in neo-Kantian form in his depiction of Marxism as rational and non-Marxism as irrational, as well as in his similar reading of Marx's relation to Hegel. But in his final phase, Lukács relativizes the difference between Marxism and non-Marxism, as well as between Marx and Hegel. Distinctions, which were earlier treated as absolute and which function throughout his Marxist period as the preconditions of his understanding of the relation of Marxism to bourgeois philosophy in all its forms, are now reinterpreted as differences in degree only.

Lukács's relativistic reinterpretation of the distinctions upon which he earlier relied for his claim for the superiority of Marxist materialism over German idealism strongly affects the way in which he now argues, or even can argue, this point. Obviously,

Lukács remains a Marxist, and Marxism is inconceivable without a basic commitment to Marx; but equally obviously, it is only possible to maintain the absolute superiority of Marxism over non-Marxism if there is a distinction in kind between Marxism and non-Marxist philosophy. In now providing a relativistic reinterpretation of distinctions upon which he earlier relied to distinguish Marxism and non-Marxism, Lukács can no longer maintain the absolute superiority of materialism over idealism; at most he can argue, as he does here, that Marxism is relatively superior to its non-Marxist alternative.

Lukács continues to refer to non-Marxism as bourgeois thought. The term "bourgeois" now functions more as an indication of the economic strata to which an author belongs than as a denial that his view is possibly true. At this point Lukács clearly relativizes the difference between non-Marxism and Marxism in various ways. The chief example is his unprecedented admission of the essential continuity of Marxism with the earlier philosophical tradition in the quotation reproduced above. For a Marxist, the relation of Marxism to early philosophy, or even the philosophical character of Marxism, is an explosive issue. It is, then, not surprising that, despite the loosening of his ties to Marxist orthodoxy, Lukács is careful to attribute this idea to Lenin.

If the difference between Marxism and non-Marxism is relative, it cannot be described through the neo-Kantian distinction between rationality and irrationality. In Lukács's earlier writings, he drew this distinction along epistemological and political lines, in order to identify the capacity of a theory for knowledge and social utility. But in *The Destruction of Reason*, paradoxically in Lukács's most Stalinist phase, he undermined the possibility of appealing to this distinction when he recognized the intrinsic rationality of objective idealism. Here, the distinction is no longer employed to separate Marxism from non-Marxism, although it is not abandoned. It is maintained in the study of social ontology, in refer-

ences to forms of irrationality exhibited in the Hitler regime unhindered by any thought," and in the romantic denial of the ontological relevance of reason.⁴⁷

Lukács further rethinks the Marxian view of reason as a form of social rationality, based on teleological positing as the basic category of social life, hence different from so-called universal metaphysical rationality.⁴⁸ In writings later than *History and Class Consciousness*, he consistently argues that capitalism is intrinsically irrational and unknowable from the so-called bourgeois perspective. Now returning to his initial Marxist perspective, Lukács insists that a view of social phenomena as intrinsically irrational, as inherently uncognizable, cannot be maintained.⁴⁹ After the fact, from the perspective of hindsight, the intrinsic rationality of historical events is always perceptible. To put this same anti-Kantian, in fact, Hegelian point in Kantian language, things-in-themselves are never uncognizable.

A theory of social rationality is a theory of philosophy.⁵⁰ But in Lukács's writings, the status of Marx's theory is consistently ambiguous. Beginning with *History and Class Consciousness*, he characterizes Marx's position in various ways as eminently philosophical, as political economy and, hence, beyond philosophy, and even as a substitution for philosophy. In his study of ontology, Lukács insists more strongly than in previous writings on the philosophical dimension of Marx's thought as well as his own. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle suggests that his aim is not only to describe ethics but to motivate ethical behavior. Similarly, Lukács now argues for the social relevance of philosophy, in particular for the social relevance of his further development of the Marxian view. "Accordingly, it [i.e., a Marxian theory of social ontology—T.R.] is the turn back to social being itself as the unavoidable basis of any human practice, of its true thought, which will describe the freedom movement in all areas of life. This basic tendency as such can be foreseen philosophically. The principal

impossibility of limiting in advance with philosophical means the concrete state of alreadyness of such movements as arise does not signify the powerlessness of Marxist thought in respect to such concrete qualities of real processes. On the contrary. Since Marxism is able to recognize the inner essence of a movement also in its simultaneous generality, but from a different point of view, with the specificity of a singular process, it can adequately grasp the development of consciousness and concretely demand such processes. . . . This text aims to make such a method possible by a statement of this kind, by providing an indication of possible suggestions."⁵¹

Lukács's acknowledgment, in his final phase, that Marx's position relates to the preceding philosophical tradition as other positions relate to their predecessors is important to its comprehension. If prior philosophy is significant as an influence on Marx only, but not in itself, then Marx's position is *sui generis*, incomparable, and—it as well as its relation to prior thought is—literally incomprehensible. But Marx's position and its relation to prior thought become coherent if Marx's view is described as relatively, not absolutely better than other philosophical theories. In Lukács's admission that Marx never broke with classical German philosophy, it becomes possible to comprehend his thought as another, further stage in the development of the philosophical tradition. Hence, it becomes possible to comprehend the relation between Marx and his predecessors to the same extent and in the same way as the relation between original philosophers is understood elsewhere in the history of philosophy.

But there is a distinction between a recognition of the relation of a theory, any theory, to its historical antecedents, and the conception of systematicity. Lukács now accepts the relation of Marx's view to others in the philosophical tradition, although he refuses the very idea of system. His reading of Hegel's position as a dualism is reflected in his unwillingness to accept a conception

of system as compatible with a concern with history. Hegel's system arises on the basis of a panlogical, abstract ontology, incompatible with his further ontological analysis of the intrinsic conditions of the real historical processes. Marx's position, which develops out of Hegel's second ontology, is incompatible with an aim at system. "So system contains the ideal of philosophical thought which from the onset is incompatible with the ontological historicity of being and already in Hegel called forth insoluble antinomies."²² In sum, although Lukács was finally able to accept the continuity between Marxism and prior philosophy, he remained unable to accept the relevance of system as such for Marx and Marxism.

CONCLUSION

A Marxist View of Reason?

THIS BOOK HAS EXAMINED Lukács's Marxist view of reason. The nature and use of reason are central themes in the philosophical tradition. Marxism has always been concerned with a socially responsible form of reason as the condition of a better form of life. In his early writings, Marx criticizes Hegel and related forms of philosophy as irrelevant to human being and advances his own position as a proposed alternative. Marxism follows Marx's lead in its effort further to develop a distinctive alternative to the traditional philosophical perspective. In our own time, this aim has been most powerfully addressed by the group of neo-Marxists collectively known as the Frankfurt School, who build on Max Horkheimer's seminal distinction between traditional and critical theory.¹ According to this view, traditional theory is concerned with knowledge in the traditional sense, but socially irrelevant; only critical theory, which abandons the old view of knowledge, is socially relevant.

This theme is repeated in a large number of works of this school. Yet none of the first generation of Frankfurt School theorists (such as Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and so on) ever provides more than a thin idea of the new alternative: a socially responsible conception

of reason. Horkheimer and Adorno analyze the failure of the Enlightenment, and Marcuse offers a conception of eros in answer to civilization.² But their efforts are mainly negative in tone, consisting in a series of rejections: of the prior philosophical and intellectual tradition, of modernity in its first flowering in the Enlightenment, and, in Marcuse's case, of the Freudian idea of the need to enlist sexuality in the service of civilization in a call for polymorphous perversity.

The Marxist case for an alternative form of reason is decisively undercut in Habermas's work, in his attempted resuscitation of the Kantian form of the traditional view, which was rejected by Marx in the first place. His work, which makes use of many Lukácsian themes, signals a retreat to a pre-Marxian notion of reason critical in an epistemological sense only. His invocation of a theory of communication presupposing ideal conditions that never obtain marks a decision to withdraw from the social context all the while proclaiming the social importance of the result. In comparison, Lukács offers a richer, theoretically more powerful analysis of the specific differences between the older view of reason and a proposed Marxist alternative as well as a more detailed account of the philosophical tradition from this new perspective.

Lukács's version of the Marxist conception of socially responsible reason emerges in the course of a critique of socially irresponsible views that fail to solve the problem of knowledge. He is known as the discoverer of so-called Hegelian Marxism, the approach to the interpretation of Marx's thought through its relation to Hegel's. But paradoxically, his own view takes shape in the course of his neo-Kantian critique of classical German philosophy from a Kantian angle of vision. The result is a brilliant critique of the orthodox idea of reason understood as a theory of epistemology combined with a Marxist alternative intended to resolve the epistemological problem and ultimately to transform the social context.

Since Marxism has always understood itself by negation of the

traditional view, in a series of oppositions between Marxism and non-Marxism, materialism and idealism, proletarian and bourgeois thought, and so on, Lukács restates this claim in the distinction between irrational or traditional and rational or non-traditional forms of philosophy. Like Plato, who held that pure theory was socially indispensable, so Lukács maintains that the Marxist solution to the problem of knowledge provides the key to all our present social concerns. With Husserl, Lukács has in common the unrestricted commitment to pure theory as a practically indispensable, socially useful form of reason. Over nearly five decades reason is the connecting thread in the successive phases of his Marxism. Whether in the analysis of the difference between Marx and Hegel, the choice between existentialism and Marxism, or the destruction of reason arising out of subjective idealism, his goal is always to find a viable way to argue that Marxism is epistemologically satisfactory where its alternative, in all its forms, fails.

For Lukács, other forms of thought are doubly irrational: in the inability of thought to know being, above all social being, which appears to it like a thing-in-itself; and in their contribution to social unreason typified by the rise of Nazism. It is, then, no accident that he is hardest on Martin Heidegger, for he correctly sees in Heidegger's antirationalism the seeds of the antisocial destruction of reason and society. It is, then, ironic, a ruse of history, that his justified critique of Heidegger's turning to National Socialism is in practice paralleled in his own unrestricted adherence to Bolshevism. One can say of this form of Marxism in practice what Marcuse says of Heidegger: "Existentialism collapses the moment its political theory is realized. The total-authoritarian state for which it longed gives the lie to all its truths."³ But the guiding idea, the commitment to a conception of reason as socially useful, indeed indispensable, is not refuted or otherwise discredited by its corruption in practice.

As perhaps its central theme, the concern with reason runs

throughout the history of philosophy. Lukács's rationalist form of Marxism rests on a coherent view of socially responsible reason. Although his position changes over time, it has a relatively stable central core, relatively close to Marx's own view.

A comparison of various periods in Lukács's Marxism reveals aspects that are difficult to reconcile, even irreconcilable, such as the criticism of Engels later withdrawn, the identical subject-object later rejected, the perspective of the proletarian class quickly abandoned, and the distinction between idealism and materialism finally relativized. It is mistaken to regard his conception of reason as simply invariant and coherent, but it is equally mistaken to dismiss it as incoherent because it undergoes change. In the evolution of a position, it is often necessary to sacrifice consistency for truth. If consistency alone were the criterion of value, there would be few views worthy of consideration.

Despite the changes in Lukács's view of reason over time, there is a central core, a common perspective, that is coherent, relatively stable, and, not surprisingly, close to Marx's own view. With respect to traditional philosophy, we can describe the Lukácsian view of reason in terms of its emphasis on practice, its holism, a categorical approach to knowledge, its "reductionism," its anti-systematic tendency, and its historical character. For Lukács, reason emphasizes practice, especially political consequences, over theory as divorced from practice, or as simply a kind of practice. It carries further the concern with the priority of practice over theory that dominates all of German idealism. In virtue of its concern with practical consequences, it rejects the traditional claim for the social relevance of pure theory or reason in general, exemplified in the Kantian idea of reason as necessarily concerned with the ends of human being.

Its holism follows from Hegel's idea of the truth as the whole. Hegelian holism derives from his rejection of foundationalism in a Cartesian formulation, that is any form of the theory of knowl-

edge as necessarily arising from a fixed point upon which to base knowledge. It has obvious links to a coherence theory of truth, in which the interrelation of the elements replaces a supposed correspondence to an independent reality. In Lukács's position, "holism" or the concern with totality means something like "a dialectical interrelation of thought and being as part of an overall process." Truth is no longer the result of a simple correspondence of one to the other.

The categorial approach carries further a main tendency of German idealism. The rationalist stress on immediate knowledge, still present in forms of empiricism, falls before the denial of direct intuition of an experiential given. Lukács's form of categoriality differs in three ways from those found in classical German idealism. First, it breaks with the effort to deduce a univocal categorial framework, initiated by Kant and prolonged by Fichte and Hegel. A category deduced prior to and apart from experience cannot know it; conversely, a category that can know experience arises out of it and, hence, changes as the contents of experience change. With Hegel, Lukács holds that philosophy is rooted in its own epoch, since the categorial framework is not invariant, but dependent on experience.

Second, consistent with the relativization of the categorial framework, the idea of a neutral perspective is abandoned. The conception of an aperspectival analysis, such as the Cartesian angel's eye, or Hegel's system, which includes all angles of vision and hence represents none, is a mere fiction. Experience can be analyzed from different angles of vision, but the most adequate viewpoint is that which is widest, including false views concerned only with phenomena, or false appearance, as well as a true theory relating appearance and essence.

Third, in effect Lukács stresses a form of relativism, understood here as the abandonment of any form of the traditional, categorially independent claim to know. Kant's deduction of the cate-

gories is intended to free claims for objectivity from dependence upon a particular categorial set. If the Kantian categories can be justified as the only possible framework, then it is also necessary. Hegel shares this intention despite other differences between speculative idealism and the critical philosophy. On the contrary, if there is more than one possible categorial framework, then claims to know are relative to a point of view. The categories that arise from experience enable its interpretation, but they do not result in "knowledge" if that means "objective truth divorced from subjectivity." Knowledge depends on and cannot be freed from the categorial framework.

Lukács's view of reason is "reductive." Now, explanation in general is also reductive in the obvious, trivial sense that disorder is reduced to order, for instance when a physical law is said to connect events earlier held to be isolated. That is different from reduction in a stronger sense, when, say, biology is reduced to physics through a suitable reinterpretation of the laws of biology in terms of the laws of physics. A "reductionistic" form of explanation through the appeal to political economy is typical not only of every form of Marxism but of other approaches as well. Marxism of every type, including Lukács's, is "reductive" since the economic dimension of society is invoked to explain other social and cultural phenomena, such as the relations between individuals in the productive process, or even in the university. In Lukács's view the economic component is never sufficient to "deduce" other phenomena; but it is always accorded pride of place as a relatively more significant factor of social explanation.

For Lukács reason is antisystematic. The rationalist concern with systematicity, which becomes the aim at total system in German idealism, peaks in Hegel's position. System is compatible with an abstract categorial analysis, but incompatible with the acknowledgment of the process nature of the given. Classical German philosophy is inconsistent in its drive toward system com-

bined with a recognition of the given that cannot be reduced to or deduced from the categories. Reason must take form in a categorical analysis, whose respect of the given requires it to forego systematicity.

The historical character of reason follows from the character of its object. For Lukács as for Marx, all sciences are ultimately historical since in all cases knowledge concerns an object subject to change. If thought depends on being for knowledge, and being is historical, then thought is also historical. As a theory of reason, Marxism completes the German idealist concern with knowledge through a theory of history. If the object of knowledge is historical, knowledge does not concern the permanent or unchanging, but the impermanent and changing. In sum, the dependence of Lukács's Marxism on the neo-Kantian analysis of the possibility of historical knowledge is manifest in his interpretation of Marxism, as the outcome of classical German philosophy, as a theory of history, as a theory of historical reason.

Lukács's Marxist view of reason is important in the context of the Marxist discussion, with respect to the contemporary debate, and in itself. In the context of Marxism, Lukács's writings command respect as an unusual, detailed effort to come to grips with non-Marxism, above all Hegel and classical German philosophy. To the widespread Marxist tendency to dismiss non-Marxism of all kinds without a hearing, backed by little direct knowledge of the views in question, a practice parenthetically prominent in other forms of philosophy, Lukács opposes a deep understanding of the German idealist tradition displayed in a detailed discussion. His work stands out as a determined effort to demonstrate what other Marxists are content merely to assert: the untruth of non-Marxism and the truth of Marxism. If for no other reason, his position is important as an unprecedented attempt to make out the Marxist view of reason. It represents a willingness to engage in the struggle between conceptual alternatives, to partake of what

Rescher has called the strife of systems, which Marxists, perhaps unsure of their ground, have mainly preferred to avoid.⁴

Lukács's discussion is further important for an understanding of the relation of thought to its past. Hegel, who formulated the conception of the history of philosophy, insisted that philosophy cannot be divorced from its history. But at least since Descartes, modern philosophy is typified by a distinction between philosophy and its history. This view is manifest in the writings of Descartes and Kant, Husserl and Heidegger, and many others, thinkers who drive a wedge between their own work and preceding efforts. It can be illustrated by Quine's *boutade* that people go into philosophy either because they are interested in the history of philosophy or because they are interested in philosophy.⁵ Marxism has always identified with the prevailing idea that a true theory need take no account of its past since what preceded it is no more than a series of errors. Despite his Marxism, Lukács's view of reason shows by example that theory and its practice are inseparable since theory must build upon its prior instances as exemplified in its history. His attention to the prior history of philosophy in the context of his own Marxism is doubly significant in calling attention to the inseparable link between classical German idealism and Marxism, which prolongs idealism under the heading of "materialism," and in illustrating the Hegelian point that later theory can only build upon the positive results of earlier views.

Lukács's analysis of reason is specifically important for its contribution to the problem of the social utility of philosophy. Since its origins in ancient Greece, with some notable exceptions, the main representatives of philosophy have drawn intellectual sustenance from the undemonstrated conviction that philosophy is necessary, in fact indispensable, for the good life. This conceit is rarely examined and difficult to justify. If anything, the role played by intellectuals in this century, particularly by philosophers, tends not to confirm, but rather to call this view of philosophy into question.

Philosophy cannot avoid politics since to think freely, in short, to philosophize, is itself a form of political action. But philosophy cannot be reduced to the political practice to which it gives rise. Lukács's thought is discredited if judged by his political views in the same way as Heidegger's. The philosophical virtue of Lukács's conception of reason lies in its examination of the traditional philosophical claim for the social relevance of its only asset: philosophical reason. In this way, he participates in the ongoing self-examination of philosophy that is central to it; for when philosophy ceases to question everything, including itself, it ceases to be philosophy.

Philosophy in one version supposes that pure theory is practically relevant, indispensable to society. Is it possible that an undogmatic version of Marxism still has a useful role to play? Lukács's acknowledgment in his final phase that Marxism can build upon other theories, his overcoming of the distinction between Marxism and non-Marxism, opens the way to utilize Marxism's distinctive insights within, not merely in opposition to, the philosophical tradition. In this way, he anticipates the rejection of Marxism in political practice in virtue of which it can only function within the philosophical discussion. Although Marxism in practice has failed, that is no reason to abandon the goal of socially useful reason that has always animated the philosophical tradition. If in practice, as history teaches, one cannot proceed directly from theory to political practice, then perhaps one can proceed to formulate a theory that in the final analysis is practically useful.⁶ In overcoming the dichotomy between Marxism and its adversaries Lukács indicates how, through putting its insights in the service of philosophy—all philosophy—Marxism might contribute to the welfare of all human beings.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. See Herbert Schnädelbach, *Philosophy in Germany, 1831-1933*, trans. Eric Matthews (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

2. For a comparative discussion of Marxism and other possibilities, see Tom Rockmore, William J. Gavin, James G. Colbert, Jr., and Thomas J. Blakeley, *Marxism and Alternatives: Towards the Conceptual Interaction among Soviet Philosophy, Neo-Thomism, Pragmatism, and Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1981).

3. A striking example of this widespread tendency to reduce Marxist philosophy to merely Marxist politics is provided by Kolakowski. He is a main contributor to philosophical Marxism, but in his important recent survey of Marxism, his interpretation of Marxism as a mere political fantasy represents a regrettable refusal to acknowledge its philosophical insights. See Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Rise, Growth and Dissolution*, trans. P. S. Falla, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

4. Cohen's work, which largely began so-called analytical Marxism, is distinguished by its nearly total neglect of Marx's relation to Hegel, precisely the main theme of traditional Marxism's understanding of Marx and itself. See Gerald A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978).

5. See Georg Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, ed. Frank Benseler, 2 vols. (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984).

6. See, e.g., Andrew Feenberg, *Lukacs, Marx, and the Sources of Critical Theory* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981).

7. See Werner Jung, *Georg Lukacs* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989).

8. For a good discussion of the development of Lukács's position in its pre-Marxist and early marxist phases, see Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukács* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

9. For a useful account of his aesthetic views, see Nicolas Tertulian, *Georges Lukács: Étapes de sa pensée esthétique* (Paris: Sycomore, 1980). See also Béla Királyfalvi, *The Aesthetics of György Lukács* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

10. All of these views are present in well-known primers of Marxism. See Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*, ed. C. P. Dutt (New York: International, 1941).

11. For general discussions of this concept, see Patrick Gardiner, "Irrationalism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York and London: Macmillan and Free Press, 1967), vol. 3, pp. 213–219. See also Jean Wahl, "Irrationalism in the History of Philosophy," in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Philip Wiener (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1973), vol. 2, pp. 634–638.

12. See Benedict de Spinoza, *The Ethics*, in *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover, 1951), vol. 2, part 2, proposition 7, p. 86.

13. See John Burnet, *Greek Philosophy*, part 1: *Thales to Plato* (London: Macmillan, 1928), p. 52.

14. It is said that Hippasos of Metapontion was drowned for revealing this secret. See John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (Cleveland and New York: World, 1982), p. 105.

15. For interesting, comparative discussion of the concept of irrationalism in the positions of Lukács and Heidegger, see István M. Fehér, "Heidegger und Lukács: Eine Hundertjahrebilanz," in *Wege und Irrwege des neueren Umgangs mit Heideggers Werk: Ein deutsch-ungarisches Symposium*, ed. I. M. Fehér (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, forthcoming), and István M. Fehér, "Lukács e la filosofia contemporanea: la problema della ragione," *Giornale di Metafisica* 10, no. 2 (May–August): 269–298.

16. Moltmann is clearly influenced by Heidegger in his view of modernity. "Les crises qui surgissent à l'intérieur du monde scientifique et technique peuvent être rationalisées; mais l'univers scientifique et tech-

nique lui-même devient une puissance irrationnelle; on ne peut plus l'embrasser du regard, parce qu'il n'est plus capable de le dépasser du regard en direction d'un autre avenir possible. Voilà qui pose une autre question: la conception de l'histoire qui identifie 'l'histoire' avec 'crise' est-elle suffisante? Et la science historique, qui abolit l'histoire en l'étudiant, rend-elle justice à l'*historicité* de l'histoire et à l'*historicité*—éventuelle—de sa propre connaissance?" Jürgen Moltmann, *Théologie de l'espérance* (Paris: Cerf-Mame, 1970), p. 256.

17. The view of so-called bourgeois thought as intrinsically irrational is basic to Marxism. For some examples in the writings of a leading representative of Marxism-Leninism, see the following works by T. I. Oiserman, listed in "Veröffentlichungen T. I. Oisermans in deutscher Sprache," in T. I. Oiserman, *Philosophie auf dem Wege zur Wissenschaft: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie* (Berlin: Akademie, 1989); "Das Rationale und das Irrationale," in *Akten des 16. Weltkongresses für Philosophie, Düsseldorf, 1978*, pp. 482–490; "Der philosophische Irrationalismus und die Krise des kapitalistischen Systems," in *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 6 (1983): 663–671; "Die Erziehung zur sozialistischen Bewusstheit und der Kampf gegen Irrationalismus," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin* 2 (1960): 31–35.

18. For a good study, see Alfred Baeumler, *Das Irrationalitätsproblem in der Ästhetik und Logik des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zur Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975).

19. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. with an intro. by J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1951), para. 1, p. 37.

20. See Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, para. 34, p. 128.

21. See *ibid.*, para. 57, p. 185.

22. See *ibid.*, p. 187.

23. See *ibid.*, p. 193.

24. See Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1961), B 566, p. 467.

25. See Georg Lukács, *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst* (1912–1914), vol. 16 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. György Márkus and Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974), and Georg Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik* (1916–1918), vol. 17 of *Georg Lukács*

Werke, ed. György Márkus and Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974).

26. See Lukács, *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst*, pp. 197–198.

27. See *ibid.*, pp. 22, 28.

28. See *ibid.*, pp. 53, 202.

29. See Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, p. 16.

30. See *ibid.*, p. 17.

31. See *ibid.*, p. 211.

32. It is usual in the discussion to conflate Marx and Marxism. For instance, Jürgen Habermas, the German social theorist, conflates them under the heading of historical materialism. For a discussion of his work from this perspective, see Tom Rockmore, *Habermas on Historical Materialism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

CHAPTER ONE

1. For instance, Habermas takes Stalin's view seriously, although he believes that it requires reformulation. See Jürgen Habermas, "Towards a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism," in Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. with an intro. by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon, 1979), pp. 130–177, esp. pp. 130–131.

2. See especially the well-known "Letter to His Father: On a Turning-Point in Life (1837)," in Karl Marx, *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and trans. by Lloyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), pp. 40–50.

3. See Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

4. Foreword to the original edition of *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Utopie zur Wissenschaft*, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels *Marx-Engels Werke*, (Berlin: Dietz, 1970), vol. 19, p. 188.

5. Classical examples are provided by Lukács and Korsch. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), and Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy* trans. by Fred Halliday (reprint ed., London: New Left, 1970). See also the article on "Materialism" in

Tom Bottomore et al., eds., *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 324–329.

6. For the best, but admittedly imperfect, discussion of which I am aware, see Jean Hyppolite, *Studies on Marx and Hegel*, ed. and trans. by John O'Neill (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

7. For a discussion of the Marxian view of ideology, see Jorge Larraín, *Marxism and Ideology* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities, 1983). For some discussion of Marx's view of ideology, see my papers, "Pensiero e tempo: Il concetto di ideologia di Marx," *Il Tetto*, no. 120 (1983): pp. 650–657; "Idéologie et herméneutique," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique* 40, no. 2 (1984): 161–173; and "Marxian Ideology and Causality," in *Idea and Reality*, ed. by J. C. Nyiri (Budapest: Corvina, 1990), pp. 210–221.

8. See, for a recent example, Gerald A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978).

9. For a representative example of the humanist reading of Marx, see Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: F. Ungar, 1969).

10. See Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. with an intro. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 189–242. For a discussion that bears on the nature of Heidegger's own "humanism," see Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism*, ed. by Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

11. See Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, ed. and trans. by T. B. Bottomore, with a foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 194–219.

12. See Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. by Frederick Engels, trans. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, 3 vols. (New York: International, 1967), pp. 19–20.

13. It is significant that Lukács's detailed examination of Hegel from a Marxist perspective, still the most important Marxist contribution to Hegel studies, is based on Marx's discussion of Hegel in this text. See Georg Lukács, *The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975).

14. See Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 195.

15. Heinrich Heine, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, trans. by John Snodgrass, with a foreword by Dennis J. Schmidt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 156. This important work contains an interesting discussion of the state of philosophy in the period immediately following Hegel.

16. See Marx, *Early Writings*, pp. 197–199.

17. See *ibid.*, p. 198.

18. See *ibid.*

19. See *ibid.*, p. 200.

20. See *ibid.*

21. In the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel writes in part: "To recognize reason as the rose in the cross of the present and thereby to enjoy the present, this is the rational insight which reconciles us to the actual." G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. with notes by T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 12.

22. See Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 203.

23. Lukács later bases his discussion of social ontology on this insight. See Georg Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, ed. by Frank Benseler, 2 vols. (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984).

24. For the classical formulation of this perspective, see Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. by Ben Brewster (New York: Vintage, 1970); see also Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. by Ben Brewster, 2 vols. (New York: Pantheon, 1970). For a sharp reply to Althusser, see Leszek Kolakowski, "Le marxisme d'Althusser," in Leszek Kolakowski, *L'Esprit révolutionnaire* (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1974), pp. 158–185.

25. See Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 65. For a fine analysis of the Marxist conflation between Marx's thought and materialism, see George Kline, "The Myth of Marx's Materialism," in *Philosophical Sovietology: The Pursuit of a Science*, ed. by Helmut Dahm, Thomas J. Blakeley, and George L. Kline (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1988), pp. 158–208.

26. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, part 1, ed. with an intro. by C. J. Arthur (New York: International, 1970), p. 37.

27. See *ibid.*, p. 39.
28. See *ibid.*, p. 41.
29. See *ibid.*, p. 42. There is an obvious family resemblance between Marx's claim that philosophy can verify its premises and the empirical criterion of meaning that emerged from the Vienna Circle. For a study of the positivistic side of Marx's theory, see Albrecht Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971).
30. See Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 42.
31. See *ibid.*, pp. 43–48.
32. See *ibid.*, p. 47.
33. See *ibid.*
34. See *ibid.* It is important to note that the opposition of such Marxist thinkers as Lukács to so-called life-philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*) is not to a theory of life, or social existence. Rather, they are concerned to reject the non-Marxist theory of social life. On this point, see the discussion of Georg Lukács's *Destruction of Reason*, in Chapter 9 below.
35. See Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 48.
36. See *ibid.*, p. 51.
37. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, p. 11: "Whatever happens, every individual is a child of his time; so philosophy too is its own time apprehended in thoughts. It is just as absurd to fancy that an individual can transcend its contemporary world as it is to fancy that an individual can overleap his own age, jump over Rhodes."
38. See Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 58.
39. See *ibid.*, p. 64.
40. On this point, see Kant's 1793 essay, "On the Proverb: That May Be True in Theory, but Is of No Practical Use," in Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1983).
41. See, on this point, G. W. F. Hegel, "Spirit That Is Certain of Itself: Morality," in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 364–409; see also Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 121–134.
42. See Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 99.
43. See Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*,

trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1961), B 866-867, pp. 657-658.

44. For a formulation of this controversial claim, see Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 47.

45. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 862, pp. 654-655.

46. For a criticism of Marxian ideology from this perspective, see Tom Rockmore, "Marxian Ideology and Causality," in *Idea and Reality*, ed. by J. C. Nyiri (Budapest: Corvina, 1990).

47. This claim has been formulated in various ways in order to describe Marx's position as science (Althusser), as critique (Korsch), or as based in the analysis of commodities (Lukács), etc. For further discussion, see Tom Rockmore, "Radicalism, Science, and Philosophy in Marx," *Cultural Hermeneutics* 3, no. 4 (1976): 429-449.

48. This is certainly one way to read the famous passage in the second afterword to *Capital*. "The mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel's hands by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general work in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell." Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, p. 20. The advantage of such a reading is to support the view, which motivates thinkers throughout the tradition, that later theories build on and carry forward the insights of their predecessors, as opposed to an indemonstrable assertion of a conceptual break.

49. See Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science."

50. Heidegger's view of the relation of philosophy to science is not altogether clear. What is clear is that in *Being and Time* he held a version of the traditional philosophical view that philosophy is deeper than and thus grounds the other sciences. At this point he regarded his position as a form of transcendental philosophy. Beginning with "What Is Metaphysics?" his inaugural lecture delivered in 1929, he abandoned the idea of transcendental philosophy.

51. For an interesting discussion of Husserlian phenomenology from this perspective, see Leszek Kolakowski, *Husserl and the Search for Certainty* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1975). For a more general discussion, which does not focus on phenomenology, see John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (New York: G. Putnam and Sons, 1929).

52. For this extreme claim, see Michel Henry, *Marx: A Philosophy of Human Reality*, trans. by Kathleen McLaughlin with a foreword by Tom Rockmore (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), p. 1: "Marxism is the interrelated set of misinterpretations that have been given concerning Marx."

53. For an account of some differences between Marx and Marxism, see Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Rise, Growth and Dissolution*, trans. by P. S. Falla, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), vol. 1, chap. 16.1: "Recapitulation and Philosophical Commentary," pp. 399-420, esp. 399-408.

CHAPTER TWO

1. For some discussion of this issue, see Tom Rockmore, "Radicalism, Science, and Philosophy in Marx," *Cultural Hermeneutics* 3, no. 4 (1976): 429-449.

2. It has been shown that in *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, his main philosophical work, Lenin quotes Engels several hundred times but Marx just once. This is a strong indication of the characteristic Marxist ignorance of Marx's thought. See Bertram Wolfe, *Marxism: One Hundred Years in the Life of a Doctrine* (n.p.: Delta, 1967).

3. See "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 681.

4. Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*, ed. by C. P. Dutt (New York: International, 1941), pp. 42-43fn.

5. See David McLellan, *Friedrich Engels* (New York: Penguin, 1977), p. 97.

6. Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring* (New York: International, 1970), p. 13.

7. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 13.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

9. See "Letters on Historical Materialism," in Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 760-768.

10. See Engels's letter to Joseph Bloch, London, September 21-22, 1890, in Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 760-765.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 762. See also Engel's letter to H. Storkenburg (25 January 1984), *ibid.*, pp. 767-768.

12. On this point, see Terrel Carver, *Engels* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 31.

13. Lukács criticized Engels's extension of dialectic to nature. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971). For a discussion of Marx's view of nature, see Alfred Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx* (London: New Left Books, 1971).

14. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 7.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

16. This theme links certain forms of phenomenology, such as Heidegger's position, and various types of positivism, for example in the Vienna Circle. For a discussion of the antimetaphysical theme in the thought of the Vienna Circle, see Victor Kraft, *Der Wiener Kreis: Der Ursprung des Neopositivismus* (Vienna and New York: Springer-Verlag, 1968).

17. Heidegger's later phase, in which he stresses the decisive difference between his own thought and philosophy, is stated in greatest detail in Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1989).

18. For the conception of a paradigm change, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

19. For a recent instance, see Rorty's report of Quine's quip concerning the distinction between those interested in the history of philosophy and those interested in philosophy, in Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. 211.

20. Hegel is very careful to leave open the further development of the history of philosophy. See, for instance, his comments at the end of his discussion of the history of philosophy in "E. Resultat," *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, part 3, in G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), vol. 20, pp. 454-462.

21. See Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. by W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier, 1962), and Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's), B 860, p. 653.

22. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 9.

23. See Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 20, p. 123: "Die Philosophie behauptet das Prinzip des Denkens als Prinzip der Welt: in der Welt sei alles reguliert durch Denken. Das protestantische Prinzip ist, daß im Christentum die Innerlichkeit allgemein als Denken zum Bewußtsein komme, als worauf jeder Anspruch habe; ja das Denken ist eines jeden Pflicht, alles darauf basiert. Die Philosophie ist so allgemeine Angelegenheit, über die jeder zu urteilen wisse; denken ist jeder von Hause aus."

24. See Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 15.

25. Habermas has continued to refer to himself as a Marxist. His development of a theory of communicative action, in which truth emerges through a consensus reached on the basis of wholly unrestricted discussion, is consistent with Engels's idea that the individual search for truth has reached its end in Hegel's thought. See Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981).

26. See Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 15.

27. According to Nietzsche, an interest in system indicates a lack of good sense. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Götzen-Dämmerung oder Wie man mit dem Hammer philosophiert*, in *Friedrich Nietzsche Werke*, ed. by Karl Schlechta, 5 vols. (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1972), vol. 3, p. 946.

28. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 20.

29. For a recent analysis of relativism that takes account of the problem of the law of the excluded middle, see Joseph Margolis, *The Truth About Relativism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

30. For a critique of the distinction between idealism and materialism and an argument that it does not suffice to differentiate Marx's position from idealism, see Tom Rockmore, *Fichte, Marx, and the German Philosophical Tradition* (Carbondale and London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), chap. 6, pp. 96-120, esp. pp. 97-107.

31. See Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 17.
32. See *ibid.*, p. 43.
33. For an emergentist approach to the mind-body problem, see the writings of C. Lloyd Morgan, J. E. Boodin, J. C. Smuts, and S. Alexander. For a critical discussion of physicalism, see Lynn Rudder Baker, *Saving Belief: A Critique of Physicalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987).
34. For Rescher's view, see Nicholas Rescher, *Conceptual Idealism* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982).
35. The two references to absolute idealism of which I am aware occur in G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Logic, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), trans. by William Wallace, with a foreword by J. N. Findlay, F.B.A. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), para. 45, Addition and para. 160, Addition, but not in Hegel's own text.
36. Berkeley is usually understood as an immaterialist.
37. For an objection to idealism understood as the denial of outer reality, see G. E. Moore, "Refutation of Idealism," in G. E. Moore, *Philosophical Studies* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960). For Marx's objection to idealism understood as the deduction of objects from concepts, see Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology, part 1*, ed. with an intro. by C. J. Arthur (New York: International, 1970), pp. 40-48.
38. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 366-381, pp. 344-352.
39. See *ibid.*, B 274-279, pp. 244-247.
40. See Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 41.
41. See *ibid.*, p. 47.
42. See *ibid.*, p. 55.
43. See *ibid.*, p. 56.
44. See *ibid.*
45. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979).
46. See Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 33.
47. See *ibid.*, p. 18.
48. See *ibid.*, p. 26.
49. See *ibid.*, p. 44.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 59. The debate between mechanistic and dialectical forms of materialism played an important role in later Marxism. For the key texts, see Nikolai Bucharin and Abram Deborin, *Kontroversen über dialektischen und mechanischen Materialismus*, ed. by Oskar Negt (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979).

51. It is interesting to note that, in his final phase, Lukács criticizes the supposed tension in Hegel's position due to his simultaneous adherence to both points of view. See Georg Lukács, "Hegels falsche und echte Ontologie," in *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984), pp. 468–558.

CHAPTER THREE

1. For instance, in a recent paper, Tietz correctly notes that Lukács's "great synthesis" is based on the effort to come to grips with Dilthey, Simmel, Rickert, Lask, M. Weber, Marx, Kierkegaard, Kant, Hegel, the aesthetic conceptions of the early Romantics, Hebbel's conception of tragedy, and Ernst's neo-classicism. See Udo Tietz, "Ästhetik und Geschichte: Eine philosophisch-ästhetische Analyse des Frühwerks von Georg Lukács," *Weimarer Beiträge* 35, no. 4 (1989): 501.

2. In the introduction to his great Marxist aesthetics, he reflected on the origins of his thought in Kant's aesthetics and, later, in Hegel's. "Ich begann als Literaturkritiker und Essayist, der in den Ästhetiken Kants, später Hegels theoretische Stütze suchte." Georg Lukács, *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen*, vol. 11 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. by György Márkus and Frank Benselet (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1963), p. 31.

3. The question is formulated in a nearly identical manner in both of his pre-Marxist aesthetics. "Die Ästhetik, welche ohne illegitime Voraussetzungen begründet werden soll, hat mit dieser Frage anzufangen: 'es gibt Kunstwerke—wie sind sie möglich?'" Georg Lukács, *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst. 1912–1914*, vol. 16 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. by György Márkus and Frank Benselet (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974), p. 9. See also Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik (1916–1918)*, vol. 17 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. by György Márkus and Frank Benselet (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974), p. 9. "Es gibt

Kunstwerke—wie sind sie möglich?’—mit dieser, dem Geiste, wenn im Einzelnen auch dem Buchtaben nach nicht, kantischer Frage muß jede Ästhetik beginnen, die als reine Geltunglehre des Ästhetischen, also weder als Metaphysik noch als Psychologie, begründet werden soll.”

4. For a good study of this movement in general, see Thomas E. Willey, *Back to Kant: The Revival of Kantianism in German Social and Historical Thought, 1860–1914* (Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1978). A limitation of this book is the inattention to Lask, one of the most original neo-Kantians.

5. Lukács, *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst*; Georg Lukács, *Frühe Schriften zur Ästhetik I*, ed. by György Márkus and Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974); *Heidelberger Ästhetik*; and, Georg Lukács *Frühe Schriften zur Ästhetik II*, ed. by György Márkus and Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1975). In his “Nachwort” to the *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, Márkus states that there is terminological evidence indicating the early influence of German neo-Kantianism, particularly the influence of Lask, is already visible in the *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst*. But this influence is considerably strengthened in the *Heidelberger Ästhetik*. See *ibid.*, p. 261. Márkus also calls attention to other influences, especially Husserl’s *Ideas I*. In his study, Jung usefully notes the influence of Simmel on the *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst* and of neo-Kantian value theory, especially Lask, on the *Heidelberger Ästhetik*. See Werner Jung, *Georg Lukács* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989).

6. See György Márkus, “Nachwort,” in Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, pp. 262–263.

7. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, part 3, in G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), vol. 20, p. 123.

8. See Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

9. See Étienne Gilson, *Études sur le rôle de la pensée médiévale dans la formation du système cartésien* (Paris: Vrin, 1930).

10. Blumenberg, for instance, points out correctly that “the heroizing of Descartes as the founding figure of the modern age has its foundation

in his self-stylizing effort, in which the historical becomes hypothetical." Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. by Robert W. Wallace (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1985), p. 183. For an excellent discussion of Descartes's thought as making possible a transition to modern philosophy through the development of themes from the Middle Ages, see *ibid.*, part 2, chap. 4.

11. For a short discussion, see L.W. Beck, "Editor's Introduction," in Immanuel Kant, *On History: Immanuel Kant*, ed. by L.W. Beck (Library of Liberal Arts, 1963), pp. vii–xxvi.

12. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. with an intro. by J.H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1951), sec. 69ff.

13. See *ibid.*, sec. 71.

14. See *ibid.*, sec. 75.

15. See *ibid.*, sec. 76.

16. See *ibid.*, sec. 78.

17. See Kant, *On History*, p. 12.

18. See *ibid.*, p. 21.

19. See *ibid.*, p. 23.

20. See *ibid.*, p. 68.

21. See *ibid.*, pp. 80–81.

22. See *ibid.*, p. 106.

23. See *ibid.*, p. 114.

24. According to Yovel, "Kant was interested in history primarily as a moral task rather than as a cognitive object. History is the domain in which human action is supposed to create a progressive synthesis between the moral demands of reason and the actual world of experience." Yirmiahu Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 6. Yovel overemphasizes the strictly moral aspect of Kant's concern for history, since he fails to see how it combines Kant's views of what one should do and what one may hope.

25. See Immanuel Kant, *The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. by Thomas K. Abbott (New York: Liberal Arts, 1949).

26. See Georg Simmel, *The Problems of the Philosophy of History: An Epistemological Essay*, trans. and ed. with an intro. by Guy Oakes (New York: Free Press, 1977).

27. See Simmel, *Problems of the Philosophy of History*, p. 199. For an interesting, comparative discussion of Max Weber and Marx, which treats Weber's view as a successor to Marx's, see Karl Löwith, *Max Weber and Karl Marx* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982).

28. Through this remark Simmel denies that historical materialism, which defines itself through the reaction against idealism, is itself more than a rejection of historical idealism; in fact, he even goes so far as to deny that it is materialism in any significant sense. For Simmel's interesting, critical discussion of historical materialism, see *Problems of the Philosophy of History*, pp. 185–200.

29. See *ibid.*, pp. 76–78.

30. See *ibid.*, p. 85.

31. E.g., see his claim that in historical materialism, hunger, which is the driving force, has nothing to do with materialism. *Ibid.*, p. 185. For a more recent, excellent argument that Marx's view is not materialist, see George L. Kline, "The Myth of Marx's Materialism," in *Philosophical Sovietology: The Pursuit of a Science*, ed. by Helmut Dahm, Thomas J. Blakeley, and George L. Kline (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1988), pp. 158–203.

32. See Simmel, *Problems of the Philosophy of History*, pp. 199–200.

33. See "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft" (Strassburger Rektoratsrede), in Wilhelm Windelband, *Präludien, Aufsätze und Reden zur Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 3rd improved edition (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1907), pp. 355–379.

34. See, for instance, the discussions of the relation of philosophy to mathematics in Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1961), B 741–766, pp. 576–593. Kant treats similar topics elsewhere, e.g., in his remarks on the relations of philosophy, mathematics, and natural sciences in Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, intro. by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), and in his reflections on the links between ethics, logic, and physics that open the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

35. See Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. by

Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 122–147: “Historicism and Weltanschauung Philosophy.”

36. See Windelband, *Aufsätze und Reden*, p. 361.

37. See *ibid.*, p. 363.

38. See *Ibid.*, p. 368.

39. See *Ibid.*, p. 379.

40. His influence on Lukács is obvious in the latter's discussion of rationalization, particularly in the discussion of “Reification and the Class Consciousness of the Proletariat.” See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971). Karl Jaspers considered Weber to be the outstanding philosopher of his generation. See Karl Jaspers, *Notizen zu Martin Heidegger*, ed. by Hans Saner (Munich and Zürich: Piper, 1989). For Weber's continuing influence on philosophy, see Habermas's lengthy discussion of his thought in Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie der kommunikativen Handelns*, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), vol. 2, chap. 8, part 1: “Ein Rückblick auf Max Webers Theorie der Moderne,” pp. 449–488.

41. Windelband, *Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft*, p. 379.

42. See *ibid.*

43. See Wilhelm Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, trans. by James H. Tufts (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), vol. 2, sec. 43: “The Metaphysics of the Irrational.”

44. See Windelband, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, p. 615.

45. For a similar reading of Schelling, see Robert F. Brown, *The Later Schelling: The Influence of Boehme on the Works of 1809–1815* (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1977).

46. See Windelband, *History of Philosophy*, p. 619.

47. See *ibid.*, p. 620.

48. See *ibid.*, p. 621.

49. See Emil Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Eugen Herriegel, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1923), vol. 1, pp. vi, xiv.

50. There is no article on his thought in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Even Willey's comprehensive discussion of neo-Kantianism, *Back to Kant*, fails to mention Lask. In an article on his work on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday, Sommerhäuser complained that his thought “has remained practically without any aftermath.” H. Sommerhäuser, “Emil

Lask 1875-1915: Zum neunzigsten Geburtstag des Denkers," *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 21, no. 1 (1967): 144, cited in István M. Fehér, "Lask, Lukács, Heidegger: The Problem of Irrationality and the Theory of Categories," in *Emil Lask and the Movement towards Concreteness*, ed. by Deborah Chaffin (Athens: Ohio University Press, forthcoming).

51. Heidegger was concerned with Lask as early as 1912. See his article "Neuere Forschungen über Logik," in Martin Heidegger, *Frühe Schriften*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann (Frankfurt: V. Klostermann, 1978), esp. pp. 24-25, 32-33. An indication of Lask's influence on Heidegger is provided by a statement in the foreword to his *Habilitationsschrift, Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Sootus* (1915): "Das philosophische Schaffen eines Emil Lask, dem an dieser Stelle ein Wort dankbar treuen Gedankens in sein fernes Soldatenbgrab nachgerufen sei, bleibt ein Beweis dafür." In Heidegger, *Frühe Schriften*, p. 191. Although, with the exception of Nietzsche, Heidegger's remarks on other thinkers in *Being and Time* are mainly negative, there is a rare positive comment on Lask. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 494. For some discussion of Lask's influence on Heidegger, see Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. by David Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities, 1989), pp. 263-264. According to Pöggeler, Lask provided a link between Husserl and Rickert, and accordingly between Aristotle and Kant. Fehér argues that a number of key Heideggerean doctrines, including the ideas of truth as disclosure, the rethinking of categories, etc., are anticipated by Lask or arise through Heidegger's attempt to come to grips with his thought. See István M. Fehér, "Lask, Lukács, Heidegger: The Problem of Irrationality and the Theory of Categories," in Chaffin, ed., *Emil Lask*.

52. See Georg Lukács, "Emil Lask: Ein Nachruf," in *Kant-Studien* 22 (1918): 349-370. For a study of the relation between Lukács and Lask, see Hartmut Rosshoff, *Emil Lask als Lehrer von Georg Lukács: Zur Form ihres Gegenstandsbegriffs* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1975).

53. In a passage dated December 1962, he writes: "Endlich mag der Leser gestatten, ganz kurz auf die Entstehungsgeschichte meiner Ästhetik hinzuweisen. Ich begann als Literaturkritiker und Essayist, der in den

Ästhetiken Kants, später Hegels theoretische Stütze suchte. Im Winter 1911/12 entstand in Florenz der erste Plan einer selbständigen Ästhetik, an deren Ausarbeitung ich mich in den Jahren 1912–1914 in Heidelberg machte. Ich denke noch immer mit Dankbarkeit an das wohlwollend-kritische Interesse, das Ernst Bloch, Emil Lask und vor allem Max Weber meinem Versuch gegenüber zeigten. Und wenn ich hier leidenschaftlich gegen den philosophischen Idealismus auftrete, so ist diese Kritik immer auch gegen meine eigene Jugendtendenz gerichtet." Georg Lukács, *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen* (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau, 1987), p. 25.

54. See Georg Lukács, *Pensée Vécue, Mémoires Parlés*, trans. by Jean Marie Argelès and Antonia Fonyi (Paris: Arche, 1986), p. 48.

55. For a discussion of the relation between Lukács and Lask, see Rosshoff, *Emil Lask als Lehrer von Georg Lukács*. For a discussion of this book, see Tom Rockmore, "Review of Rosshoff, *Emil Lask als Lehrer von Georg Lukács*, *Studies in Soviet Thought* 21 (1980): 275–277.

56. For a discussion of the conception of irrationality in Lask, Lukács, and Heidegger, see István M. Fehér, "Lask, Lukács, Heidegger."

57. Fehér stresses this aspect. See *ibid*.

58. See Nicholas Rescher, *A Useful Inheritance: Evolutionary Aspects of the Theory of Knowledge* (Savage, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990).

59. See Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 22, 31, and 168.

60. Heidegger regarded irrationality as a mere failure of rationality. See Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 179–180.

61. According to Jamme, Husserl was unable to comprehend the mythical, or pre-logical, although Ernst Cassirer based himself on Husserl in order to overcome ethnocentrism in the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. See Christoph Jamme, "Überrationalismus gegen Irrationalismus: Husserls Sicht der mythische Lebenswelt," in Christoph Jamme and Otto Pöggeler, *Phänomenologie in Widerstreit* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp. 65–80, esp. 76–77.

62. "Es gehört nicht viel Phantasie dazu, sie die boshaften Be-

merkungen Nietzsches oder Schopenhauers vorzustellen, hätten Sie Hitler erlebt. Dennoch barg dieser Irrationalismus seine Gefährer, die dann in Hitlers Weltanschauung so brutal und in Heideggers Philosophie so subtil ans Tageslicht traten." Paul Hühnerfeld, *In Sachen Heidegger: Versuch über ein deutsches Genie* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 1959), p. 108; also, pp. 93 and 96.

63. See Alfred Baeumler, *Das Irrationalitätsproblem in der Ästhetik und Logik des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zur Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975). He understands "irrationality" as the essential lack of logical transparency. "Man nennt diese klare Einsicht in das aller logischen Durchsichtigkeit entzogen Wesen der Individualität Irrationalismus." *Ibid.*, p. 4.

64. See Lukács, *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, p. 16: "Diese notwendige Geltungsfremdheit des Materials, seines 'funktionelle Irrationalität', wie Lask sagt, brauchte das Material mit Erlebnishaftigkeit, mit 'Leben' in eine enge Beziehung zu bringen, deren Wesen hier in ihren Hauptzügen geklärt werden muß, um durch die verschiedenen systematischen Möglichkeiten des Erlebens hindurch zu seiner ästhetischen Setzung zu gelangen."

65. See Georg Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. by P. Palmer (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities, 1981), p. 95: "As far as I know, ['irrationality'] first crops up in Kuno Fischer's *Fichte*. Windelband, in his *History of Philosophy*, already deals with Schelling and Schopenhauer in a section headed 'Metaphysics of Irrationalism.' This terminology predominates even more in Lask."

66. See *Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, completed in 1900, and published in 1902, in Lask; *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, pp. 1-274.

67. His conception of irrationality has not attracted much attention. But see Agostino Carrino, *L'irrazionale nel concetto: Comunità e diritto in Emil Lask* (Naples: Edizione scientifica italiana, 1983).

68. On this point, see Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, p. 77.

69. See *ibid.*, p. 78.

70. For this distinction, see Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, with an intro. by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), para. 18, pp. 45-46. Kant here distinguishes between judgments of experience, which have objective validity, and judgments of perception, which are only subjectively valid.

71. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 58–78: “Consciousness: 1. Sense-certainty; 2. Perception.”

72. See G. W. F. Hegel, *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*, trans. by H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977).

73. See Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, p. 30.

74. See *ibid.*, p. 79. For an analysis of Lask’s reading of German idealism, see Tom Rockmore, “Lask’s Neo-Kantian Reading of German Idealism,” in Chaffin, ed., *Emil Lask*.

75. For Kant’s similar claim about Plato, see Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason* (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin’s, 1962), B 370, p. 310.

76. For Kant’s criticism, see *Intelligenzblatt* no. 109, cited in Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte’s Leben und litterarischem Briefwechsel*, ed. I. H. Fichte (Sulzbach: Seidel’sche Buchhandlung, 1831), pp. 175–176: “Denn reine Wissenschaftslehre ist nicht mehr oder weniger als blosser Logik, welche mit ihren Principien sich nicht zum Materialen des Erkenntnisses versteigt, sondern vom Inhalte dessen als reine Logik abstrahirt, aus welcher ein reales Objekt herauszuklauben vergebliche und daher auch nie versuchte Arbeit ist, sondern wo, wenn es die Transzendental-Philosophie gilt, allererst zur Metaphysik überschritten werden muss.” This objection is later echoed independently in Marx’s criticism of Hegel’s supposed effort to descend from heaven to earth. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology, part 1*, ed. with an intro., by C. J. Arthur (New York: International, 1970), pp. 39–48.

77. See Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, 117–118, 144–145.

78. See *ibid.*, p. 63.

79. See the Introduction to Heinrich Rickert, *The Limits of Concept Formation in Natural Science*, trans. by Guy Oakes (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. xvi.

80. See Rickert, *Limits of Concept Formation*, pp. 27–28.

81. See *ibid.*, p. 31.

82. See *ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

83. See *ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

84. See *ibid.*, p. 62.

85. See *ibid.*, p. 63.

86. See *ibid.*, p. 101.

87. See, *ibid.*, p. 116, where he writes: "Thus we come to the following result. It is not only the case that in our prescientific forms of knowledge there are two conceptions of reality that are different in principle, the generalizing and the individualizing. Corresponding to them, there are also two forms of the scientific treatment of reality. In their ultimate objectives as well as in their final results, they differ from one another logically and in principle."

88. See *ibid.*, p. 185.

89. See *ibid.*, p. 201.

90. See Max Weber's study, "Roscher und Knies und die logischen Probleme der historischen Nationalökonomie, 1903-1906," in Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. by Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1968). On p. 7, he indicates that he is interested in exploring the utility of Rickert's perspective in this other discipline.

91. See *ibid.*, p. 3.

92. See *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

93. See *ibid.*, p. 64.

94. See *ibid.*, p. 132.

95. See *ibid.*, p. 134.

96. See *ibid.*, p. 136.

97. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 95.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. According to Schnädelbach, this is one of three most influential philosophical treatises of this century. The others are supposedly Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus* and Heidegger's *Being and Time*. See Herbert Schnädelbach, *Philosophy in Germany 1831-1933*, trans. by Eric Matthews (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 1.

2. For a record of the debate surrounding the publication of Lukács's seminal work, see *Filozófiai figyelő évkönyve, A "Történelem és sz-*

tálytydat" a 20-as évek vitáiban, ed. by István Hermann, 4 vols. (Budapest: Lukács Archives, 1981).

3. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), pp. ix–xxxix.

4. See Karl Korsch, *Marxismus und Philosophie* (Frankfurt and Vienna: Europäische Verlagsanstalt and Europa Verlag, 1966 [orig. ed. 1923]). The greater depth of Lukács knowledge of Hegel is a factor in the greater degree of attention accorded to his Hegelian reading of Marx.

5. It is significant that Kolakowski, a highly competent observer, who criticizes Lukács's profoundly dogmatic turn of mind, also praises him as the first writer to provide a correct interpretation of Marx. See Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution*, trans. by P. S. Falla, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), vol. 3, chap. 7: "György Lukács: Reason in the Service of Dogma," pp. 253–307.

6. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xli.

7. *Ibid.*, p. xlii.

8. See *ibid.*, pp. xlii–xliii. In later writings, in particular in *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, Lukács consciously strives to develop Marx's perspective beyond the point at which he left it.

9. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xliii.

10. *Ibid.*, p. xliii. Lukács's emphases.

11. *Ibid.*

12. See *ibid.*, p. xlii.

13. See Georg Lukács, *Lenin: Studie Über den Zusammenhang seiner Gedanken* (Berlin: Malik, 1924) initially published in *Forum* (1924).

14. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xiv.

15. See *ibid.*, p. xlii.

16. In the preface to the new edition (1967), Lukács claimed that his objections were not unjustified, although his reasoning was incorrect. See *ibid.*, pp. xix–xx.

17. See *ibid.*, p. xliii.

18. See *ibid.*, pp. ix, xi.

19. See *ibid.*, pp. xliii–xliv.

20. Lukács's discussion of Hegel is well under way prior to his Marxist turn. In his pre-Marxist aesthetics writings, in particular in the *Heidelberger Ästhetik*, he exhibits a wide awareness of Hegel's thought,

as well as an interest in the category of totality and a number of other features which he later develops in his Marxist period.

21. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xlv.

22. See V. I. Lenin, *Cahiers sur la dialectique de Hegel*, trans. by Henri Lefebvre and Norbert Guterman (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p. 241.

23. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xlv.

24. See Michael Kosok, "The Formalization of Hegel's Dialectical Logic," in G. W. F. Hegel, *A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. by Alasdair MacIntyre (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1972).

25. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Logic, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1830)*, trans. by William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), pp. 14-15.

26. Perhaps the best among the many books on this topic is Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukács* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

27. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 83.

28. The failure to refer to Marxism at this crucial stage in his analysis should not be taken as even a hint of Lukács's lack of enthusiasm about official Marxism. Thus, in the preface, dated Christmas 1922, he writes in part: "The author would like to take this opportunity to state unequivocally that in his view the experiences of the years of revolution have provided a magnificent confirmation of all the essential aspects of orthodox (i.e. Communist) Marxism." *Ibid.*, p. xliii.

29. See Georg Lukács, *The Young Hegel. Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1976).

30. For a rare example of a writer who regards himself as a Marxist, but denies the claim that the economic dimension of society is the central component in a correct analysis of modern industrial society, see Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), vol. 2, chap. 8.2 pp. 489-547: "Marx und die These der inneren Kolonisierung." For a detailed critique of Habermas's objections to Marx's view of political economy, see Tom Rockmore, *Habermas on Historical Materialism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), chap. 8: "Labor Theory of Value and Historical Materialism," pp. 128-146.

31. The priority of the economic dimension over all other aspects is the central epistemological thesis of this essay. Lukács's later self-criticism of his book for a supposed overemphasis of totality at the expense of "overriding the priority of economics" represents an indication of his desire to be orthodox with respect to Marxism-Leninism. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xx.

32. The span of positivist approaches is very large. Piaget provides a variant of the view that philosophical problems can be resolved on an extraphilosophic plane in his effort to substitute the approach of developmental psychology for epistemology. See Jean Piaget, *Epistémologie génétique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970). An example of the claim that some philosophical problems are pseudoproblems is provided by Carnap's attack on metaphysics, especially Heidegger's view of metaphysics. See Rudolf Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language," in *Logical Positivism*, ed. by A. J. Ayer (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959). For the even more radical view that philosophical problems in general are pseudoproblems that arise through a misuse of language, see Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul and Humanities, 1963).

33. The argument for the break in Marx's evolution was advanced, after the publication of his early writings, in order to maintain the Marxist view of his position as science. According to this reading, there is an epistemological break (*coupure épistémologique*) between Marx's early thought, which is philosophy, and his later thought, which is science. See Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. by Ben Brewster (New York: Vintage, 1970).

34. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxiv. Lukács further attributes his mistaken critique of Hess to this conflation. See *ibid.*, p. xxxv.

35. Karl Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. by Frederick Engels, trans. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, 3 vols. (New York: International, 1975), vol. 1, p. 72.

36. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 84.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

39. This is a persistent theme in Weber's writings. For the most direct

statement of his view, see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. by Talcott Parsons with an intro. by Anthony Giddens (London: Allen and Unwin, 1984).

40. This idea apparently underlies Habermas's recent effort to regard the bureaucratic structure as the most important factor in modern society. See Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, vol. 2, p. 504.

41. For an interesting exploration of this theme, see Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: Seabury, 1974).

42. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 100.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

45. For Quine's recent argument in this sense, see "Epistemology Naturalized," in W. V. O. Quine *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 69-90.

46. For a more developed form of this argument, see Tom Rockmore, "Marxian Ideology and Causality," in *Idea and Reality*, ed. by J. C. Nyiri (Budapest: Corvina, 1990).

47. See, e.g., Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf). Anhang 1850-1859* (Frankfurt and Vienna: Europäische Verlagsanstalt and Europa Verlag, 1953); Karl Marx, *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, in *Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels Werke* ed. Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED (Berlin: Dietz, 1969); Karl Marx, *Das Kapital Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, ed. Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED, 3 vols. (Berlin: Dietz, 1969).

48. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 106.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

50. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, part 2, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*.

51. See Plato, *Republic*, Bks. 6 and 7.

52. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. by W. D. Ross in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), bk. Zeta, chap. 17, 1041b, line 12, p. 1644.

53. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. with notes by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 11.

54. See Georg Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, ed. by Frank Benseler, 2 vols. (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1984).

55. It is this denial of the very idea of knowledge in independence of a point of view which leads Lukács in this book to argue for a proletarian form of epistemology. See his essay "Class Consciousness." For the extension of Lukács's view that claims to know are intrinsically perspectival, see Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1936).

56. For an examination of this point, see Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. by Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon, 1968).

CHAPTER FIVE

1. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), pp. 110–148.

2. Lukács's later description of his book as "an attempt to out-Hegel Hegel" is most nearly true for his analysis of classical German thought. See *ibid.*, p. xxiii.

3. See Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1961), B xvi–xvii, pp. 21–22.

4. He develops this viewpoint in his lectures on the history of philosophy. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, vols. 18, 19, and 20 of G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971).

5. According to Hegel, thought is not determined by social being, but by other thought. In the discussion of the history of philosophy, he writes: "So ist die höhere Einsicht, daß der Geist in seiner Notwendigkeit frei ist und nur in ihr seine Freiheit findet, wie seine Notwendigkeit nur in seiner Freiheit ruht." *Ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 45. Hegel further argues that the freedom of thought is the necessary condition and beginning of philosophy. See *ibid.*, pp. 115–117. Rorty has recently formulated a similar view that thought is determined by other thought under the heading of epistemological behaviorism. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1979).

6. It follows that the widespread tendency to understand Hegel's position as the antithesis of Kant's is a profound mistake. For an otherwise good discussion, which mistakenly regards Hegel's position as the antithesis of Kant's, see Merold Westphal, *History and Truth* (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1979). Hegel resembles the other post-Kantians, including Fichte and Schelling, in his concern to be faithful, not to the letter, but to the spirit of the critical philosophy.

7. See G. W. F. Hegel, *The Logic of Hegel, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. by William Wallace (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), para. 26–79, pp. 60–142. For an analysis of this passage, see Tom Rockmore, *Hegel's Circular Epistemology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), chap. 5, pp. 111–137.

8. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 111.

9. *Ibid.*

10. See Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. by Frederick Engels, trans. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, 3 vols. (New York: International, 1975), vol. 1, p. 372: "And would not such a history be easier to compile, since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former, but not the latter?"

11. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 112.

12. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xiv, pp. 20–21.

13. Heidegger makes a similar confusion. See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), para. 6, p. 46: "But createdness [*Geschaffenheit*] in the widest sense of something having been produced [*Herstelltheit*], was an essential item in the structure of the ancient conception of Being."

14. This is the meaning of Vico's well-known statement on the convertibility of production and knowledge. See Giambattista Vico, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca, N. Y. and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), para. 331, pp. 52–53. For a discussion of Vico's anti-Cartesianism, see Tom Rockmore, "Vico, Marx, and Anti-Cartesian Theory of Knowledge," in *Vico and Marx: Affinities and Contrasts*, ed. by Giorgio

Tagliacozzo (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1983), pp. 178–191. Kant held a similar view. In the discussion leading up to his formulation of the famous Copernican Revolution in remarks on Galileo, Evangelista Torricelli, and G. E. Stahl, he states: “They learned that reason has insight only into that which it produces [*herstellt*] after a plan of its own.” Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xiii, p. 20.

15. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 119.

16. Kant argues that for philosophy “creation” means “the possibility of rationally comprehending the facts,” whereas for mathematics “to create” and “to comprehend” are identical. Kant’s distinction occurs in the discussion of the “Architectonic of Pure Reason.” See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 865, pp. 656–657.

17. For an example of a realist argument, see Joseph Margolis, *Pragmatism without Foundations: Reconciling Realism and Relativism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986). With relativism, Margolis’s realism is one of the main themes of his trilogy, significantly entitled, *The Persistence of Reality*. It also includes *Science without Unity: Reconciling the Human and Natural Sciences* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987) and *Texts without Referents: Reconciling Science and Narrative* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1989). For a recent form of idealism, see the trilogy by Nicholas Rescher, *Conceptual Idealism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973); *The Primacy of Practice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973); and *Methodological Pragmatism* (New York: New York University Press, 1977).

18. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 112. Lukács’s emphases.

19. For Hegel’s criticism, see the famous preface to G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 24–27.

20. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 860, p. 653.

21. For this kind of reading of the German idealist tradition, see Rockmore, *Hegel’s Circular Epistemology*.

22. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 113. Lukács’s emphasis.

23. See Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957).

24. His objection is similar to Kierkegaard’s claim, against Hegel, that

reason cannot know existence. For this criticism, see Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. by David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1968).

25. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 566, p. 467.

26. This Kantian model is the basis of Heidegger's concern with Being as present under the mode of absence. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

27. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 116.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 116–117.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 117–118.

30. For instance, in a letter to Goethe, the German poet Schiller made the following assessment of Fichte's position: "According to Fichte's verbal statements, which were not mentioned in his book, the self creates through its representations; and all reality is only in the self. The world is to the self like a ball, which the self has thrown out and then caught again through reflection [*Reflexion*]." Letter from Schiller to Goethe of October 28, 1794, in Johann Christian Friedrich Schiller, *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe*, ed. by H. Hauff, 2 vols. Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1856), vol. 1, p. 26.

31. According to Lask, starting in 1797, Fichte developed an antirationalist theory of the empirical given. See Emil Lask, *Fichtes Idealismus und die Geschichte*, esp. part 2: "Fichtes Rationalismus und die Irrationalität des Empirischen," in Emil Lask, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Eugen Herrieger, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1923).

32. For a critique of the idea of system as it culminates in Hegel's thought, see Tom Rockmore, "Hegel on Systematic Philosophy," *Proceedings of the Beyond Translation Symposium*, ed. by David Wood (forthcoming).

33. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 122.

34. See *ibid.*

35. To the best of my knowledge, there is no discussion in the literature of Lukács's reading of Fichte. For a good treatment of Hegel's interpretation of Fichte, which has come under increasing criticism in recent years, see Reinhard Lauth, *Hegel vor der Wissenschaftslehre* (Mainz and Stuttgart: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur and F. Steiner, 1987).

36. This reading of Fichte is widespread. For an argument for the fun-

damental significance of Fichte's conception of subjectivity for Marx's thought, see Tom Rockmore, *Fichte, Marx, and German Philosophy* (Carbondale and London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980).

37. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 123.

38. See *ibid.*, p. 125.

39. See *ibid.*, p. 126.

40. For Kant's resorption of practice into theory, see his semipopular essay, "On the Proverb: That May Be True in Theory but Is of No Practical Use" (1793), in Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, trans. with an intro. by Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1983).

41. For a recent discussion of this theme, see Tom Rockmore, "De l'intérêt de la raison," *Archives de Philosophie* 51, no. 3 (July–September, 1988): 441–455.

42. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 129–134.

43. Lukács is correct to regard mathematics and fate as exclusive alternatives. It is interesting to note Heidegger's antiscientific rejection of science, including mathematics and his resurrection of the idea of blind fate. For Heidegger's idea of fate, see Heidegger, *Being and Time*, esp. para. 74: "The Basic Constitution of Historicity," pp. 434–438.

44. This passive view of human being is present in all of Heidegger's later writings, beginning with the lectures on Nietzsche. See Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, ed. by David Farrell Krell, 4 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), and especially "Letter on Humanism," in Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 189–242.

45. For an example, see Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

46. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 131–133.

47. In the preface to the new edition (1967), many years after the original edition (1923) in the course of a critical evaluation of his brilliant first Marxist book, Lukács writes: "This transformation into its opposite of what was in itself a correct intention follows from the abstract and idealistic conception of praxis already referred to [i.e., his own earlier failure to comprehend practice—T.R.]. This is seen clearly in the—once again not wholly misguided—polemic against Engels who had looked to

experiment and industry for the typical cases in which praxis proves to be a criterion of theory." *Ibid.*, p. xix.

48. Carnap criticized Heidegger's thought as meaningless. See Rudolph Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language," in *Logical Positivism*, ed. by A. J. Ayer (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959). Wittgenstein rejected the problems of philosophy as pseudo-problems. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, and Humanities, 1963), proposition 6.52 in which he observes that a response to scientific questions leaves those of life untouched.

49. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 134.

50. For an elaboration of this view, see Johann Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon, 1955).

51. For a classic argument in this sense, see R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960).

52. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 140.

53. The other side of the claim that after Kant philosophy is no longer concerned with pure epistemology is the view that in the period after the critical philosophy the original epistemological impulse is lost. For this view in two disparate authors, see Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, tran. by Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 76, and Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985). Habermas's argument in his later book marks the abandonment of his earlier view that a radical critique of knowledge is possible as social theory only. For the earlier view, see Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon, 1968), p. vii.

54. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 142. Lukács's emphases.

55. See *ibid.*, p. 143.

56. See *ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

58. For Kant's views of history, see particularly "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent" (1784) and "Speculative Beginning of Human History" (1786), in Kant, *Perpetual Peace*. For Fichte's view of

history, see *Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (1804), vol. 4 of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Fichtes Werke*, ed. by I. H. Fichte, (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1971).

59. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 145–146.

60. This frequent claim rests on a superficial reading of Hegel's view. See Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1972). See further Tom Rockmore, "Hegel und die gesellschaftliche Funktion der Vernunft," in *Zur Architektonik der Vernunft*, ed. by Lothar Berthold (Berlin: Akademie, 1990), pp. 186–200.

61. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 148–149.

CHAPTER SIX

1. See Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," in Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. by T. B. Bottomore with a foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 58 (emphasis in original): "This dissolution of society, as a particular class, is the *proletariat*."

2. See Marx, *Early Writings*, p. 59 (emphases in original): "Just as philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *intellectual* weapons in philosophy."

3. See Marx, *Early Writings*, *ibid.*: "Philosophy can only be realized by the abolition of the proletariat, and the proletariat can only be abolished by the realization of philosophy."

4. See the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. by Robert C. Tucker (New York and London: Norton, 1972), p. 5.

5. This is the point of the second thesis on Feuerbach. See Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 144.

6. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 149.

7. For this famous analysis, see the discussion of "Independence and dependence of self-consciousness: Lordship and Bondage," in G. W. F.

Hegel, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 111–118.

8. For Hegel's famous claim, see G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. with notes by T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 11.

9. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 150.

10. For the classic statement of the conception of a paradigm, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). For an account of the discussion about incommensurability to which Kuhn's notion gave rise, see Paul Hoyningen-Huene, *Die Wissenschaftsphilosophie Thomas S. Kuhns: Rekonstruktion und Grundlagenprobleme* (Braunschweig and Wiesbaden: F. Vieweg, 1989), chap. 6: "Der Begriff der wissenschaftlichen Revolution," pp. 193–217, esp. pp. 202–217.

11. The realization that the assumption of alternative categorical frameworks threatens traditional claims for epistemic objectivity is one reason for the effort to deny their existence. See Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme," in Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), pp. 183–198.

12. For a recent argument that similar concepts function differently in different theories under the heading of "reoccupation," see Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. by Robert M. Wallace, (Cambridge, Mass. and London: MIT Press, 1985).

13. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 150.

14. For claims to examine theoretical presuppositions from within the theory they support, see Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1965) and Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. by W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier, 1962).

15. See Otto Neurath, "Foundations of the Social Sciences," in *Foundations of the Unity of Science*, 2 vols., ed. by Otto Neurath, Rudolf Carnap, and Charles Morris (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), II, p. 47.

16. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. xxii–xxiii: "As to the way in which the problem was dealt with, it is not hard to see

today that it was treated in purely Hegelian terms. In particular its ultimate philosophical foundation is the identical subject-object that realizes itself in the historical process. Of course, in Hegel it arises in a purely logical and philosophical form when the highest stage of absolute spirit is attained in philosophy by abolishing alienation and by the return of self-consciousness to itself, thus realizing the identical subject-object. In *History and Class Consciousness*, however, this process is socio-historical and it culminates when the proletariat reaches this stage in its class consciousness, thus becoming the identical subject-object of history. This does indeed appear to 'stand Hegel on his feet'; it appears as if the logico-metaphysical construction of the *Phenomenology of Mind* had found its authentic realization in the existence and the consciousness of the proletariat. And this appears in turn to provide a philosophical foundation for the proletariat's efforts to form a classless society through revolution and to conclude the 'prehistory' of mankind. But is the identical subject-object here anything more in truth than a purely metaphysical construct? Can a genuinely identical subject-object be created by self-knowledge, however adequate, and however truly based on an adequate knowledge of society? We need only formulate the question precisely to see that it must be answered in the negative."

17. For this view, see Heinrich Rickert, *The Limits of Concept Formation in Natural Science*, trans. by Guy Oakes (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1986). For discussion of this view, see Chapter 4 above.

18. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 155.

19. For Marx's view, which is obviously closely related to Hegel's, see the important passage on "The Method of Political Economy," in Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin, 1973), pp. 100-108.

20. This is a lapidary reference to Hegel's well-known view of history. For this part of his position, see G. W. F. Hegel, *Reason in History: A General Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. with an intro. by Robert S. Hartman (Indianapolis, Ind. and New York: Library of Liberal Arts, 1953).

21. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 159. This part of

the argument closely follows Marx's analysis of the categorical interpretation of experience. See Karl Marx, "The Method of Political Economy," in Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, pp. 100–108.

22. For Hegel's similar argument, see the chapter on "Sense Certainty," in Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 58–66.

23. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 161.

24. See *ibid.*, p. 164.

25. Lukács, *ibid.*, pp. 163–164.

26. For Heidegger's view of truth as disclosure, see Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), para. 44, pp. 256–273.

27. For the longer version of this argument, see Georg Lukács, "Class Consciousness," in *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 46–82.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–170.

29. See Hegel's well-known letter of October 28, 1808 to Niethammer, his friend: "Die theoretische Arbeit, überzeuge ich mich täglich mehr, bringt mehr zustande in der Welt als die praktische; ist erst das Reich der Vorstellung revolutioniert, so hält die Wirklichkeit nicht aus." *Briefe von und an Hegel*, ed. by J. Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Meiner, 1952), vol. I, p. 253.

30. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 173–174.

31. See *ibid.*, p. 180.

32. For a leading discussion of process ontology, see Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957). For a rejection of Cartesian ontology from a pragmatic perspective, see Heidegger, *Being and Time*, para. 18–21, pp. 114–134.

33. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 177–178.

34. See *ibid.*, p. 178.

35. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, part 1, ed. with an intro. by C. J. Arthur (New York: International, 1970), p. 47: "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."

36. Interestingly, Heidegger, who maintains that being is time, and stresses experience and history, finally recoils from this thesis in his mythological appeal to Being as the motor of history. See Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in Martin Heidegger, *The Ques-*

tion Concerning Technology and Other Essays, trans. with an intro. by William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 3-35.

37. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 181; Lukács's emphases.

38. See *ibid.*, p. 184.

39. See *ibid.*, p. 185.

40. For Vico's famous claim for the intrinsic link between human knowledge and human production, which anticipates Kant's Copernican Revolution, see Giambattista Vico, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca, N. Y. and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), para. 331, pp. 52-53. For a study of the relation of Marx and Vico, see Tom Rockmore, "Vico, Marx and Anti-Cartesian Theory of Knowledge," in *Vico and Marx: Affinities and Contrasts*, ed. by Giorgio Tagliacozzo (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1983), pp. 178-191.

41. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 197; Lukács's emphases.

42. *Ibid.*

43. See Plato, *Plato's Republic*, trans. by G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 1974), 597, pp. 241-242.

44. For Lenin's view of the party, see V. I. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* (New York: International, 1969). For Marx's view, see *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, in Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 53-65. For Lukács's analysis of the party at this point, see "Towards a Methodology of the Problem of Organization," in Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 295-342.

45. For Lukács's view that in Marxism orthodoxy refers solely to method, see his essay, "What Is Orthodox Marxism?" in *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 1-26.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

47. *Ibid.*

48. See Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 144.

49. For a Marxist analysis of the relation between ethics and the objective truth of history, see Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours* (Mexico D. F.: Pioneer Publishers, 1937).

50. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 199.
51. For the classic formulation of this view, see Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 46–57.
52. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 199.
53. See *ibid.*, p. 200.
54. See *ibid.*, p. 202.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 204.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. See *ibid.*, p. 209.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. In our own time, this view has been expounded most convincingly by Rescher. See Nicholas Rescher, *The Strife of Systems* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979).
2. See Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingston (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. xxiii.
3. See Georg Lukács, *The Young Hegel. Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975), p. xi.
4. See Georg Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. by P. Palmer (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1981).
5. See Georg Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1951).
6. See Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1961), B xlv, pp. 20–21.
7. For a discussion of this idea, see Tom Rockmore, "Idealistic Hermeneutics and the Hermeneutics of Idealism," *Idealistic Studies* 12, no. 2 (1982): 91–102.
8. See "What Is Orthodox Marxism?" in Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. 1–26, esp. p. 1.
9. There is a clear parallel with Heidegger, who later suggested that

his own extensive compromises with National Socialism were essentially tactical. See Martin Heidegger, "The Rectorate: Facts and Thoughts," trans. by Karsten Harries, *Review of Metaphysics* 38 (March 1985): 481–502.

10. Kolakowski is correct to regard Lukács in this respect as an outstanding example of the betrayal of reason. See Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, trans. by P. S. Falla, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978) vol. 3, p. 307. But Lukács is unfortunately not exceptional in this regard, as the examples of Heidegger and Paul de Man, as well as their political defenders, continue to demonstrate. For discussion of Heidegger, see Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

11. István Eörsi is correct, when he writes in the preface to Lukács's autobiography: "Force nous est de reconnaître qu'il fournit des justifications idéologiques aux actions et tendances les plus inhumaines, les plus répréhensibles du point de vue moral et politique, de l'époque stalinienne. Il témoigne, à ce haut niveau de la pensée qui était toujours le sien, de la schizophrénie des intellectuels communistes lorsqu'il juge différemment les camps de la mort staliniens et les autres camps de la mort; ce ne seraient que des verrues, les unes inévitable dans la perspective de l'histoire universelle, les autres sans raison, sur la face éclatante de santé de la totalité. Et pourtant, il est impossible de refuser toute sympathie à l'auteur de ces confessions qui, malgré la leçon des décennies qui se sont écoulées depuis cette époque et résistant aussi bien à la pression de l'opinion publique qu'à la tentation des exemples donnés par d'autres personnalités, refuse de corriger ou de maquiller son passé pour se montrer, sans pitié pour lui-même, tel qu'il était, tel que l'ont rendu ses monstrueuses illusions." Georg Lukács, *Pensée Vécue, Mémoires Parlés*, trans. by Jean-Marie Argelès and Antonia Fonyi (Paris: l'Arche, 1986), p. 21.

12. See Georg Lukács, *Pensée Vécue, Mémoires Parlés*, p. 119.

13. See *ibid.*, p. 141.

14. See *ibid.*

15. A particularly curious instance is the attribution now to both Marx and Engels of the insight, in fact borrowed from Lask, of the contradiction between method and system in Hegel's thought. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, pp. 225, 557.

16. See István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin, 1970), p. 93.
17. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. 562.
18. See Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxiii.
19. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. with notes by T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 11.
20. See, e.g., Jean Hyppolite, *Studies on Marx and Hegel*, ed. and trans. by John O'Neill (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), chap. 4: "Alienation and Objectification: Commentary on G. Lukács' *The Young Hegel*." See also H. S. Harris, *Hegel's Development I: Towards the Sunlight* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972).
21. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. xiv.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. An example of the ongoing effort to provide a non-Hegelian reading of figures in German idealism is provided by Schulz's rehabilitation of Schelling. See Walter Schulz, *Die Vollendung des Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1955).
25. Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. xiv.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. xiv–xv.
27. This is one lesson of the complex debate concerning Heidegger's Nazism. It has become abundantly clear that his philosophy cannot be understood without a grasp of his political commitment.
28. Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. xxxvi.
29. For Fichte's economic analysis, see "Der geschlossene Handelsstaat" (1800), in Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Fichtes Werke*, ed. by I. H. Fichte (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1971), vol. 3, pp. 386–513.
30. For a good study of Hegel's view of political economy, see Norbert Waszek, *The Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel's Account of "Civil Society"* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988). For a critique of Hegel's understanding of political economy, see C. J. Arthur, "Hegel's Theory of Value," in *Value, Social Form and the State*, ed. by M. Williams (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp. 21–41.
31. Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. xxvii.
32. *Ibid.*

33. This claim, which reverses the orthodox Marxist tendency to consider Marx as a political economist and Engels as a philosopher, is justified by the priority of Engels's early economic discussion. For Engels's initial contribution, written in 1841, whose influence is clearly visible in Marx's "Paris Manuscripts," see Friedrich Engels, "Umriss zu einer Kritik der Nationökonomie," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Marx-Engels Werke* (Berlin: Dietz, 1970), vol. 1, pp. 499-524.

34. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, pp. xxix-xxx.

35. See Georg Lukács, *Der junge Marx: Seine philosophische Entwicklung von 1840-1844* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1965).

36. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, part 1, chap. 2: "What is the meaning of 'positivity' in Hegel's early works?" pp. 18-30; and chap. 6: "The place of 'positivity' in the development of Hegel's thought," pp. 74-90.

37. See *ibid.*, part 2, chap. 8: "Reformulation of the problem of 'positivity'," pp. 225-238.

38. See *ibid.*, p. 168.

39. See *ibid.*, p. 361.

40. See *ibid.*, p. 362.

41. For an insensitive, reductionist Marxist reading of religion, see Karl Kautsky, *Foundations of Christianity: A Study in Christian Origins* (London and New York: Ohrbach and Chambers and International, 1925); for a very different, sensitive, still Marxist discussion, see Milan Machovec, *A Marxist Looks at Jesus*, intro. by Peter Hebblethwaite (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976); for a discussion of the relation of Marxism and religion, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *Marxism and Christianity* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

42. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, part 1, vol. 18 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), p. 94.

43. His acknowledgment of the religious dimension of Hegel's thought is inconsistent with Kojève's well known Marxist reading of Hegel. See Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (New York: Basic, 1969).

44. See Shlomo Avineri, "The Discovery of Hegel's Early Lectures on *The Philosophy of Right*," *Owl of Minerva* 16, no. 2 (Spring, 1985): 202.

45. For Marx's theory of alienation, see Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. by T. B. Bottomore with a foreword by Erich Fromm. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 121-134. There is an important literature devoted solely to this concept. For a good discussion of Marx's view of alienation, see István Mészáros, *Marx's Concept of Alienation* (London: Merlin, 1970).

46. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. 583.

47. For a summary, see *ibid.*, pp. 537-539.

48. See *ibid.*, p. 99.

49. See *ibid.*, p. 314.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 538, translation corrected. Note that in his employment of the word "schaffen" Lukács now recognizes that the relation of human beings to their environment is basically productive, not creative.

51. See *ibid.*, pp. 539-541.

52. See *ibid.*, p. 334.

53. See *ibid.*, p. 358.

54. See *ibid.*, p. 500.

55. One should be careful not to overlook the depth of Hegel's economic concern. See Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, para. 189-208, pp. 126-134. His interest in capitalism extended to its results, e.g., the possibility of widespread poverty. See Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, para. 241-242, pp. 148-150.

56. Habermas's effort to depict Hegel as the first thinker of modernity falters on the absence of a specific theory of modernity in Hegel's thought. See Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985). For a comparative study of the problem of modernity in Hegel and Habermas, see Tom Rockmore, "Modernity and reason: Habermas and Hegel," *Man and World* 22 (1989): 232-246.

57. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. 538.

58. See Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 3, para. 257 on *Schädelwissenschaft*, para. 360 on *Bildung*, para. 548 on *Religion*, paras. 575 and 587 on *das absolute Wissen*.

59. See the famous passage "Das System der Bedürfnisse" (System of Needs), in *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, vol. 7 of Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, para. 189-208, pp. 346-360.

60. For a description of Marx's complex, critical discussion of Hegel in the "Paris Manuscripts," see Chapter 2 above.

61. The translation has 576 pages, and the edition published in the *Lukács Werke* has 703 pages.

62. See Lukács, *Young Hegel*, p. 564.

63. See *ibid.*, p. 553.

64. See *ibid.*, p. 564.

65. See *ibid.*, p. 553.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. For Hegel's classification of his contemporaries' views as forms of idealism, which is decisive for the development of his own position, see G. W. F. Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, ed. by H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977). Hegel's later writings repeat and further develop but never alter this basic understanding, which is a main theme in all his later thought.

2. Lukács correctly points to the distinction between political types of irrationalism in the *Destruction of Reason*. But he neglects to indicate his insistence on the epistemological irrationalism of idealism, or bourgeois thought. See Georg Lukács, *Pensée Vécue, Mémoires Parlés*, trans. by Jean-Marie Argelès and Antonia Fonyi (Paris: Arche, 1986), p. 141.

3. See *La Nef*, November, 1946.

4. See *Forum*, 1946, no. 4.

5. Georg Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1951).

6. See Georg Lukács, *Existentialisme ou Marxisme?*, trans. by E. Kelen (Paris: Editions Nagel, 1948, reprinted 1961).

7. See "Anhang: Heidegger Redivivus," in Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, pp. 161-183.

8. See Georg Lukács, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft*, vol. 9 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. by György Markus and Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1962). This book was first published in Hungarian by Akadémiai Kiadó in Budapest in 1954 and simultaneously by

Aufbau Verlag in Berlin. The English version, which is based on the Hungarian, is: *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. by P. Palmer (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1981).

9. Budapest: Lukács Archives, 1982.

10. Budapest: Lukács Archives, 1982.

11. The obvious exception is Hegel's resolute monism. For a discussion, see Denise Souche-Dagues, *Hégélianisme et Dualisme: Réflexions sur le phénomène* (Paris: Vrin, 1990).

12. See Lukács, *Pensée Vécue, Mémoires Parlés*, p. 120.

13. See Lukács, *Existentialisme ou Marxisme?*, p. 13. The introduction to the German edition is rather different and less helpful in setting out the aims of the work to follow. There are other, smaller differences between the two editions as well, in part, because the German version is the author's whereas the French translation is based on a Hungarian text.

14. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror*, trans. by John O'Neill (Boston: Beacon, 1969), and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Les Aventures de la dialectique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1955).

15. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la Raison Dialectique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960).

16. Heidegger strongly disclaims the label of existentialism in his effort to disentangle his thought from Sartre's. See Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 189–242, esp. p. 213.

17. See *ibid.*, p. 219.

18. See Lucien Goldmann, *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy*, trans. by William Q. Boelhower (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977). For discussion of this thesis, see Tom Rockmore, "Review of Goldmann, *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy*," *Studies in Soviet Thought* 23 (1982): 342–346.

19. Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, pp. 61–62.

20. *Ibid.*, chap. 1, pp. 7–32.

21. See *ibid.*, p. 10.

22. See *ibid.*, pp. 14–15.

23. See *ibid.*, p. 15.

24. See *ibid.*, p. 17.

25. See *ibid.*, p. 18.

26. See *ibid.*, p. 20.
27. This is the intent of the famous passage on *Objektivismus* in his last, unfinished work. See Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. with an intro. by David Carr (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970), para. 14: "Precursory characterization of objectivism and transcendentalism. The struggle between these two ideas as the sense of modern spiritual history," pp. 68–70.
28. For a discussion of the Vienna Circle that stresses the insistence on formalism, see Victor Kraft, *Der Wiener Kreis: Der Ursprung des Neopositivismus, Ein Kapitel der jüngsten Philosophiegeschichte* (Vienna and New York: Springer, 1968).
29. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 23.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
31. On this point, see Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1950).
32. Heidegger is the best-known exponent of Nietzsche's thought in the recent discussion. See Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 2 vols. (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961). Heidegger's discussion of Nietzsche occurs in an effort to come to grips with Nietzsche's position that begins early in the century. For an account of the Nietzsche reception, see "Anhang: Zur Geschichte der Nietzsche-Deutung (1894–1954)" in Karl Lowith, *Nietzsches Philosophie des ewigen Wiederkehr des Gleichen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956), pp. 199–225.
33. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, pp. 29.
34. See *ibid.*, p. 33.
35. See *ibid.*, p. 37.
36. See *ibid.*, p. 39.
37. For Heidegger's view of *Dasein*, see Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), para. 4, pp. 32–35.
38. See Alfred Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt: Eine Einleitung in die verstehende Soziologie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974).
39. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 44.
40. See *ibid.*, pp. 44–45.
41. For Carnap's well-known critique of Heidegger, see Rudolf Car-

nap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language" in *Logical Positivism*, ed. by A. J. Ayer (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959).

42. See Lukács *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, "Die Freiheit in einer fetischisierten Welt und der Fetisch der Freiheit," pp. 49–57.

43. See Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, ed. Frederick Engels, trans. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, 3 vols. (New York: International, 1967), pp. 71–83.

44. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 53.

45. See *ibid.*, p. 55.

46. See Jean-Paul Sartre, "Sartre par Sartre," in *Nouvel Observateur* January 26, 1969.

47. Lukács here employs a third alternative to the more usual German terms *Moralität* and *Sittlichkeit*.

48. The title of this section in the French edition is "Sartre contre Marx." See Lukács, *Existentialisme ou Marxisme?*, pp. 133–150. In the German edition, the same section is entitled "Wieder einmal wird Marx getötet." See Lukács, *Marxismus oder Existentialismus?*, pp. 69–78.

49. Lukács influence is clearly visible in Sartre's Marxist turn, particularly in the preface to the *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*. The preface was published separately as *Questions de Méthode* in 1957. It is included in *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*, pp. 15–111. It is translated into English as Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*, trans. with an intro. by Hazel Barnes (New York: Vintage, 1968).

50. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, pp. 70–71. Lukács here in effect takes issue with Heidegger's objection to Marxism's metaphysical status. See note 17 above.

51. See *ibid.*, p. 74.

52. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945).

53. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 74.

54. See *ibid.*, p. 78.

55. A notable exception is his effort to separate historical and metaphysical materialism in the conclusion to *The Transcendence of the Ego*. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *La Transcendance de l'égo: Esquisse d'une description phénoménologique* (Paris: Vrin, 1966), pp. 85–87.

56. See *ibid.*, p. 90.

57. See *ibid.*, p. 92.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 91 (my translation—T.R.).
59. See *ibid.*, p. 99 and p. 113.
60. See *ibid.*, p. 103.
61. See *ibid.*, p. 99 and p. 117.
62. See *ibid.*, pp. 101–102 and pp. 105–106.
63. See *ibid.*, pp. 104–105.
64. See *ibid.*, p. 107.
65. Lukács rapidly realigned his own view on Lenin's. See Georg Lukács, *Lenin: Studie über den Zusammenhang seiner Gedanken* (Berlin: Malik, 1924).
66. For this controversy, see Nikolai Bucharin and Abram Deborin. *Kontroversen über dialektischen und mechanistischen Materialismus*, ed. by Oskar Negt (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969).
67. Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 128.
68. An early version of this view, which may have influenced Engels's formulation of the Marxist approach, is provided by Fichte. See "First Introduction to the Science of Knowledge," in Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Fichte: Science of Knowledge (Wissenschaftslehre) with the First and Second Introductions*, ed. and trans. by Peter Heath and John Lachs (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970).
69. For a discussion of this distinction, see Tom Rockmore, *Fichte, Marx and German Philosophy* (Cardondale and London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), pp. 101–107.
70. See Lukács, *Existentialismus oder Marxismus?*, p. 132.
71. See *ibid.*
72. See *ibid.*, p. 135.
73. See *ibid.*, pp. 143–144.
74. See *ibid.*, pp. 144–145.
75. See *ibid.*, p. 150.
76. See *ibid.*, p. 155.
77. See *ibid.*, pp. 159–160. Beyond his desire to distinguish his position from Sartre's, Heidegger's awareness of the anthropological element in Marx's thought is a likely further factor in his celebrated antihumanism. See Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, pp. 189–242.
78. See, e.g., Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism*, ed. by Joseph Mar-

golis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989). See also *The Heidegger Case: Politics/Philosophy*, ed. by Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

79. For the concept of the turning, see Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, p. 208. For the reading of his later thought as separate from, even opposed to, National Socialism, see Jacques Derrida, *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1987), Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *La Fiction du politique: Heidegger, l'art et la politique* (Paris: C. Bourgois, 1987), Silvio Vietta, *Heideggers Kritik am Nationalsozialismus und an der Technik* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1989). For a critique of this reading of Heidegger, see Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

80. There are 865 pages in the English translation.

81. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 5.

82. See *ibid.*, p. 3.

83. See *ibid.*, p. 5.

84. His conception of irrationality in this book has not attracted much attention. See, e.g., H. A. Hodges, "Lukács on Irrationalism," in *Georg Lukács: The Man, His Work, and His Ideas*, ed. by G. H. R. Parkinson (New York: Vintage, 1970). This is a review of *The Destruction of Reason*, not a general discussion of irrationality.

85. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 33.

86. See *ibid.*, p. 4.

87. See *ibid.*, p. 77.

88. See *ibid.*, p. 78.

89. See *ibid.*, p. 81.

90. See *ibid.*

91. See *ibid.*, p. 82.

92. See *ibid.*, p. 84.

93. See *ibid.*, p. 88.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

97. *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.

98. See Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Fichtes Werke*, edited by I. H. Fichte

(Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1971), vol. 1, p. 434: "Was für eine Philosophie man wähle, hängt sonach davon ab, was für eine Mensch ist."

99. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 100.

100. See *ibid.*, p. 115.

101. See *ibid.*, p. 120.

102. See *ibid.*

103. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

104. Sartre's assumption that human activity is intrinsically rational underlies his study of Flaubert. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Idiot de la famille: Gustave Flaubert*, 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1971).

105. Lévi-Strauss's structuralist anthropology is the best-known example of this view. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris: Plon, 1958).

106. For an example of this approach, see Michel Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969).

107. See Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1962), B xxxviii-xxxix, pp. 33-35.

108. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 129.

109. See *ibid.*, p. 145.

110. See *ibid.*, p. 147.

111. See *ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

112. See *ibid.*, p. 189.

113. See *ibid.*, p. 162.

114. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

115. See *ibid.*, p. 197.

116. See *ibid.*, p. 203.

117. See *ibid.*, p. 204.

118. See *ibid.*, p. 205.

119. See *ibid.*

120. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

121. See *ibid.*, p. 221.

122. See *ibid.*, p. 250.

123. See *ibid.*, p. 253.

124. See *ibid.*, p. 262.

125. See *ibid.*, p. 274.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
127. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
128. See *ibid.*, p. 312.
129. See *ibid.*, p. 310.
130. *Ibid.*, p. 313.
131. See *ibid.*, p. 319.
132. See *ibid.*, p. 324.
133. See *ibid.*, pp. 341, 381, and 385.
134. See *ibid.*, pp. 345 and 346.
135. See *ibid.*, p. 355.
136. See *ibid.*, p. 362.
137. See *ibid.*, 360.
138. See *ibid.*, p. 389.
139. *Ibid.*, p. 394.
140. See *ibid.*, p. 417.
141. See *ibid.*, p. 403.
142. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
143. *Ibid.*, p. 416; translation modified.
144. *Ibid.*, p. 426.
145. See *ibid.*, p. 442.
146. See *ibid.*, p. 452.
147. See *ibid.*, p. 461.
148. See *ibid.*, pp. 464-465.
149. See *ibid.*, p. 474.
150. On the relation between Lukács and Heidegger, see Costanzo Preve, "Lukács e Heidegger. Dal destino della tecnica al rifiuto dell gabbia d'accio," in *Tramonto dell'occidente?*, ed. by Gian Mario Cazzaniga et al. (Naples: Edizioni Quattro Venti, 1989), pp. 149-163.
151. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, pp. 489-490.
152. See *ibid.*, p. 495.
153. *Ibid.*, pp. 495-496.
154. See Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1968), vol. 2, sec. 31, pp. 99-100.
155. See, e.g., Gerald L. Bruns, *Heidegger's Language, Truth and Poetry: Estrangements in the Later Writings* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989). For discussion of this book, see Tom Rockmore,

"Review of Bruns, *Heidegger's Language, Truth and Poetry*," *Review of Metaphysics* 44 (Sept., 1990): 132-134.

156. Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, pp. 500-501.

157. See Karl Löwith *Heidegger—Denker in dürtiger Zeit* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1953).

158. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, pp. 565-566.

159. *Ibid.*, p. 547.

160. See, e.g., his remarks in G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Logic, Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), trans. by William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), para. 10, pp. 14-15.

161. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, pp. 551 and 553.

162. See *ibid.*, p. 552.

163. See *ibid.*, pp. 560 and 561.

164. See *ibid.*, pp. 566-567.

165. See *ibid.*, p. 576.

166. For Lenin's view of imperialism, see V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism," in *Ten Classics of Marxism* (New York: International, 1940).

167. Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 585.

168. *Ibid.*, p. 586.

169. See, for example, the writings of Kenneth Boulding or those of C. Wright Mills.

170. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 604.

171. *Ibid.*, p. 606.

172. See *ibid.*, p. 616.

173. See *ibid.*, pp. 619 and 629.

174. See *ibid.*, p. 614.

175. See, e.g., Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. by Talcott Parsons with an intro. by Anthony Giddens (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987).

176. Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, pp. 756-757.

177. *Ibid.*, p. 715.

178. The texts in his corpus, which have been highly influential in presenting his own view of his relation to politics, are "Facts and Thoughts," the *Spiegel* interview, and "Letter on Humanism." See "Facts and Thoughts. The Rectorate 1933/34," trans. by Karsten Harries, *Review of*

Metaphysics 38 (March 1985): 481–502; “Only a God Can Save Us: *Der Spiegel*’s Interview with Martin Heidegger,” *Philosophy Today*, Winter 1976, pp. 267–284, and “Letter on Humanism,” in Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, pp. 189–242.

179. See Lukács, *Destruction of Reason*, p. 720.

180. See *ibid.*, pp. 720–721.

181. *Ibid.*, pp. 726–727.

182. For a discussion of antifoundationalism, see Michael Williams, *Ungrounded Belief* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977).

CHAPTER NINE

1. Georg Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, vols. 13 and 14 of *Georg Lukács Werke*, ed. by Frank Benseler (Darmstadt and Newwied: Luchterhand, 1984 and 1986). For another interesting part of Lukács’s *Nachlass*, with a clear link to his study of ontology, see his posthumously published book, *Demokratisierung Heute und Morgen*, ed. by Laszlo Sziklai (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1985).

2. *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, p. 731.

3. See *ibid.*

4. See *ibid.*, pp. 740–741.

5. For a study of the work as a whole, see Nicolas Tertulian, “Lukács’s Ontology,” in *Lukács Today: Essays in Marxist Philosophy*, ed. with an intro. by Tom Rockmore (Boston and Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1988), pp. 243–273. See also Ernest Joós, *Lukács’s Last Autocriticism: The Ontology* (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities, 1983). For a discussion of its relation to Lukács’s other writings, see Werner Jung, *Lukács* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989).

6. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, p. 737.

7. See *ibid.*

8. For a criticism of Lenin and Luxembourg for a supposed failure to grasp the fundamental economic categories, see *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, pp. 234–235.

9. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, chap. 2, pp. 421–467: “Nikolai Hartmanns Vorstoss zu einer echten Ontologie.”

10. "Die Erinnerung an die bedeutendsten Vorläufer scheint uns dennoch nützlich zu sein, schon weil aus ihr sichtbar wird, dass die Bedeutung des Marxismus nicht auf seinen radikalen Bruch mit bestimmten metaphysischen und idealistischen Tendenzen der bürgerlichen Philosophie beschränkt werden darf, wie das die Periode Stalin-Schdanow verkündete, sondern um Lenins Ausdruck zu gebrauchen, darauf, dass er 'sich alles Wertvolle der mehr als zweitausendjährigen Entwicklung des menschlichen Denkens und der menschlichen Kultur aneignete und verarbeitete.'" *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, p. 397. Since there is no complete nor standard translation of this work, I will provide my own translation in the body of the text and the German original in the notes.

11. For a representative work, see Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. by Ben Brewster, 2 vols. (New York: Pantheon, 1970).

12. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, pp. 301, 566–567, 606n., 639.

13. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, chap. 4, pp. 500–730: "Die Entfremdung." For a demonstration of the continued concern with alienation throughout Marx's corpus, see István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin, 1970).

14. See I. Eörsi, *Gelebtes Denken: Eine Autobiographie im Dialog* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981). The passages quoted are from pp. 235ff.

15. "Nach Marx stelle ich mir die Ontologie als die eigentliche Philosophie vor, die auf der Geschichte basiert. Nun ist es aber historisch nicht zweifelhaft, dass das anorganische Sein zuerst ist, und daraus—wie, was wissen wir nicht, aber wann, das wissen wir ungefähr—geht das organische Sein hervor, und zwar in dessen pflanzlichen und tierischen Formen. Und aus diesem biologischen Zustand geht darin später durch außerordentlich viele Übergänge das hervor, was wir als menschliches gesellschaftliches Sein bezeichnen, dessen Wesen die teleologische Setzung der Menschen ist, das heisst die Arbeit. Das ist die entscheidendste neue Kategorie, weil sie alles in sich fasst." *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, p. 739.

16. "Marx hat vor allem ausgearbeitet, und das halte ich für den wichtigsten Teil der Marxschen Theorie, dass es die grundlegende Kategorie des gesellschaftlichen Seins ist, und das steht für jedes Sein, dass es geschichtlich ist. In den Pariser Manuskripten sagt Marx, dass es nur eine einzige Wissenschaft gibt, nämlich die Geschichte und er fügt noch hinzu:

"Ein ungegenständliches Wesen ist ein Unwesen." Das heisst, eine Sache, die keine kategoriale Eigenschaft besitzt, kann nicht existieren. Existenz bedeutet also, dass etwas in einer Gegenständlichkeit von bestimmter Form existiert, dass heisst, die Gegenständlichkeit von bestimmter Form macht jene Kategorie aus, zu der das betreffende Wesen gehört. Hier trennt sich die Ontologie scharf von der alten Philosophie." *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, pp. 739-740.

17. Lukács shares with Heidegger the concern to develop a theory based on history. But Lukács's version of a Marxian social ontology is less radical than Heidegger's later thought, which abandons philosophy for so-called new thinking. For Heidegger's understanding of the Marxian view of history and for his own conception of thinking beyond philosophy, see Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 189-242, "Letter on Humanism." For an extensive account of his view of thinking beyond philosophy, in the context of another beginning, see Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, ed. by Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt: V. Klostermann, 1989).

18. *Setzen*, which I have here rendered as "positing," is a term difficult to translate into English. It is the German equivalent of the Greek *tithemi*, as in the term "hypothesis." *Setzen*, as Lukács was aware, is a technical term in Fichte's thought. For a discussion of the multiple meanings of this term in Fichte's position, see Tom Rockmore, *Fichte, Marx, and the German Philosophical Tradition* (Carbondale and London: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), pp. 13ff.

19. For Heidegger's theory of *Dasein* as an alternative to earlier theories of human being, see Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), para. 5, pp. 32-35.

20. Lukács here follows Marx's view of the role of the category. See "The Method of Political Economy," in Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. by Martin Nicolaus (Middlesex: Penguin, 1973), introduction, part 3, pp. 100-108.

21. The non-reductive approach is close to Engels's later view. See Engels's letter to Joseph Bloch, 21-22 September 1890, in *The Marx-Engels*

Reader, ed. by Robert C. Tucker (New York and London: Norton, 1978), pp. 760–765.

22. For the early, undeveloped, quasi-Spinozistic view of Marxism, see Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1971), p. 204.

23. See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, part 2, chap. 5: "Temporality and Historicity," pp. 424–455.

24. See Karl Marx, "The Method of Political Economy," p. 105.

25. One can speculate that Lukács's interest in N. Hartmann is fueled by the latter's long, sympathetic analysis of classical German philosophy, with an intensive study of Hegel. See Nicolai Hartmann, *Die Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus*, (Berlin: W. de Gruyter 1929), vol. 2: *Hegel*.

26. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, p. 424.

27. See *ibid.*, p. 438.

28. See *ibid.*, pp. 450–451.

29. See *ibid.*, p. 467. Significantly, Lukács here takes back his earlier restriction of dialectic to society as part of his critique of Engels in *History and Class Consciousness*. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, pp. 7 and 38.

30. See *ibid.*, chap. 3, pp. 468–558.

31. See *ibid.*, p. 469.

32. *Ibid.*

33. "Dieser "Dünger der Widersprüche" erscheint bei Hegel vorerst als die Erkenntnis der Widersprüchlichkeit der Gegenwart, als Problem nicht nur des Denkens, sondern zugleich als das der Wirklichkeit selbst, als primär ontologisches Problem, das aber weit über die Gegenwart hinausweist, indem es als dynamische Grundlage der gesamten Wirklichkeit gefasst wird und als ihr Fundament darum als das eines jeden rational ontologischen Denkens über diese." *Ibid.*

34. "Die erste Vereinigung von dialektischer Abfolge und realer Geschichtlichkeit." *Ibid.*, p. 470.

35. See *ibid.*, p. 475.

36. "Einerseits erhalten bei Hegel die echten ontologischen Zusammenhänge ihren angemessenen gedanklichen Ausdruck erst in den Formen von logischen Kategorien, andererseits werden die logischen Kategorien nicht also blosse Denkbestimmungen gefasst, sonder müssen als dyna-

mische Bestandteile der wesentlichen Bewegung der Wirklichkeit selbst, als Stufen, als Etappen auf dem Wege der Sichselbsterreichens des Geistes verstanden werden. Die prinzipiellen Antinomien also, die sich uns bis jetzt gezeigt haben und im folgenden zeigen werden, entspringen aus dem Zusammenstoss zweier Ontologien, die im bewusst vorgetragenen System von Hegel unerkannt vorhanden sind und vielfach gegeneinander wirksam werden." *Ibid.*, p. 483.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 503.

38. For his critique of Kant's unresolved dualism, see e.g. *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, vol. 8 of G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), para. 60, p. 83: "In jedem dualistischen System, insbesondere aber im Kantischen, gibt sich sein Grundmangel durch die Inkonsistenz, das zu *vereinigen*, was einen Augenblick vorher als selbständig, somit als *unvereinbar* erklärt worden ist, zu erkennen."

39. See *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 13, p. 485.

40. He writes: "Die folgenden Betrachtungen über Hegel stehen also im Zeichen von Marx: Das Herausarbeiten seiner Ontologie, vor allem der des gesellschaftlichen Seins, dient dazu, um in intimen Zusammenhang und qualitativer Verschiedenheit, ja Engengesetztheit, die Stellungnahme beider grossen Denker besser zu beleuchten." *Ibid.*, p. 513.

41. See *ibid.*, pp. 37 and 87.

42. See *ibid.*, p. 107.

43. See *ibid.*, p. 109.

44. "Deiser Exkurs musste gemacht werden, um zu zeigen, dass die heutige Aufgabe der Marxisten nur sein kann: die echte Methode, die echte Ontologie von Marx wieder zum Leben zu erwecken, vor allem um mit ihrer Hilfe nicht nur eine historische getreue Analyse der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung seit Marx' Tod, die heute noch so gut wie völlig fehlt, wissenschaftlich möglich zu machen, sondern auch um das gesamte Sein, im Sinne von Marx, als in seinen Grundlagen historischen (irreversiblen) Prozess zu begreifen und darzustellen. Das ist der einzige theoretisch gangbare Weg, den Prozess des Menschwerdens des Menschen, das Werden des Menschengeschlechts ohne jede Transzendenz, ohne jede Utopie gedanklich darzustellen. Nur so kann diese

Theorie jenes stets irdisch-immanent bleibende praktische Pathos wiedererhalten, dass sie bei Marx selbst hatte und das später—teilweise vom Leninschen Zwischenspiel abgesehen—theoretisch wie praktisch weitgehendst verloren ging." *Ibid.*, p. 112.

45. See *ibid.*, pp. 112–113.

46. See *ibid.*, vol. 14, pp. 694–695.

47. See *ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 468.

48. See *ibid.*, pp. 637–638.

49. Lukács here follows Hegel's view of the dependence of perceptual multiplicity upon the mind of the observer. See the discussion of perception under the heading of "Die Wahrnehmung oder das Ding und die Täuschung," in *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, vol. 3 of G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, pp. 93–107, esp. p. 99.

50. Habermas maintains the distinction between social rationality and philosophy in his description of his own position as social theory. See Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. by John Viertel (Boston: Beacon, 1973), pp. 1–41: "Introduction: Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Praxis."

51. "Es ist also die Rückwendung zum gesellschaftlichen Sein selbst, als zur unaufhebbaren Grundlage einer jeden menschlichen Praxis, eines deren wahren Gedankens, die die Befreiungsbewegung von der Manipulation auf allen Gebieten des Lebens charakterisieren wird. Diese Grundtendenz als solche kann philosophisch voraussehbar sein. Die prinzipielle Unmöglichkeit, das konkrete Geradesosein so entstehender Bewegungen mit den Mitteln der Philosophie in voraus zu bestimmen, bedeutet allerdings nicht eine Ohnmacht des marxistischen Denkens solchen konkreten Qualitäten realer Prozesse gegenüber. Im Gegenteil. Gerade weil der Marxismus imstande sein kann, das prinzipbildende Wesen einer Bewegung auch in ihrer Allgemeinheit simultan, aber aus verschiedener Sicht, mit der Eigenart einmaliger Prozesse zu erkennen, kann er das Bewusstwerden solcher Prozesse adäquat erfassen und konkret fördern. . . . Für das Erwecken einer solchen Methode, die ein derartiges Erklären erst möglich macht, erstrebt diese Schrift einige, ein Wegweisen ermöglichende Anregungen zu bieten." *Zur Ontologie*, vol. 14, p. 730.

52. "So enthält das System als Ideal der philosophischen Gedanken, die mit der ontologischen Geschichtlichkeit eines Seins von vornherein

unvereinbar sind und schon bei Hegel selbst unlösbare Antinomien hervorriefen." *Ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 572.

CONCLUSION

1. See Max Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," in Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*, trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell et al. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

2. The most developed analysis of reason in the first generation of the Frankfurt School is in fact a denunciation of what is represented as the contemporary idea of reason. See Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: Seabury, 1974).

3. Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon, 1969), p. 40.

4. See Nicholas Rescher, *The Strife of Systems* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979).

5. See Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. 211.

6. For Hegel's view of the social utility of theory, see his letter of 28 October 1808 to Niethammer, in *Briefe von und an Hegel*, ed. by J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Meiner, 1952), vol. 1, p. 253.

INDEX

- Adorno, Theodor, 243
 Althusser, Louis, 34, 223
 Aristotle, 9, 17, 35, 96, 99, 149, 225;
 Nicomachean Ethics, 240
- Baader, Franz von, 67
 Bauemler, Alfred, 70, 204
 Beauvoir, Simone de, 181, 183, 188
 Bell, Daniel, 24
 Benjamin, Walter, 243
 Bergson, Henri, 141
 Berkeley, George, 49
 Bloch, Ernst, 69
 Bloch, Joseph, 38
 Böhme, Jacob, 67, 204
 Bradley, F. H., 49
 Bucharin, N. I., 145
- Carnap, Rudolf, 120
 Chamberlain, H. S., 210
 classical German philosophy, 103–
 127, 129, 130, 132, 137, 142, 143,
 146, 149, 151, 153, 154, 161, 163,
 164, 174, 175, 177, 183, 196, 215,
 216, 221, 222, 225, 229, 231, 241,
 248, 249
 Cohen, G. A., 34
 Comte, Auguste, 209
 contextualism, 1, 99, 150, 162
 Croce, Benedetto, 1
- de Man, Paul, 158
 Derrida, Jacques, 50
 Descartes, René, 9, 43, 45, 49, 60, 87,
 108, 109, 111, 250
 dialectical materialism, 153–174, 177,
 178, 181, 189, 191, 197, 198, 207
 Dilthey, Wilhelm, 65, 75, 204, 205,
 207, 208, 212
 Droysen, J. G., 65
- Elster, Jon, 70
 Engels, Friedrich, 3, 7, 15, 16, 18, 21,
 23, 33–53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 82, 118–
 119, 133, 143, 147, 148, 151, 158,
 159, 161–162, 164, 165, 173, 176,
 180, 182, 189, 190, 201, 215, 221,
 223, 234, 246; *The Dialectics of*
 Nature, 40; *Herr Eugen Dühring's*
 Revolution in Science, 38; *Ludwig*
 Feuerbach and the Outcome of
 Classical German Philosophy, 40
 existentialism, 157, 180–192, 245
- false consciousness, 15
 Feuerbach, Ludwig, 20, 21, 42, 51,
 159
 Fichte, J. G., 18, 44, 69, 70, 72, 73,
 98, 104, 110, 114–116, 120, 123,
 126, 163, 168, 177, 180, 196, 197,
 225, 247; *Foundations of the*

- Fichte, J. G. (*cont.*)
Science of Knowledge, 73; "Second Introduction to the Science of Knowledge," 73; *Wissenschaftslehre* (1804), 196
- Fischer, Kuno, 70, 196
- Fourier, Charles, 18
- Freud, Sigmund, 101
- Freyer, Hans, 209
- Fries, J. F., 110
- Gadamer, H.-G., 65
- German idealism, 8, 17, 72, 105, 143, 154, 174, 208, 220, 223, 238, 246, 249, 250
- German neo-Kantianism, 9, 12, 55-77, 104, 135
- Glockner, Hermann, 208
- Gobineau, Arthur, 210
- Goldmann, Lucien, 182
- Görres, Josef von, 211
- Gramsci, Antonio, 4
- Green, T. H., 49
- Habermas, Jürgen, 34
- Hamann, J. G., 197
- Häring, T. L., 166
- Hartmann, Eduard von, 211
- Hartmann, Nicolai, 221, 230
- Hegel, G. W. F., 4, 7, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 33, 35, 38, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 51, 52, 60, 69, 71, 72, 73, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 86, 88, 95, 98, 99, 100, 106, 109, 110, 111, 113, 115, 117, 122, 123-126, 130, 132, 133, 136, 139, 140, 141, 143, 146, 149, 150, 153-174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 182, 194, 196, 199, 207-208, 211, 216, 221, 222, 225, 227, 229, 230-236, 237, 238, 241-242, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250; *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, 125, 141; *Phenomenology of Mind* (Jena, 1803-1805), 167; *Philosophy of Right*, 20, 26, 172; *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 20, 22, 160, 164, 167-174, 199, 233; *Science of Logic*, 82-83, 141, 156, 236
- Heidegger, Martin, 10, 19, 24, 31, 42, 44, 70, 117, 118, 137, 141, 158, 181, 182, 185, 186, 191-192, 204, 205-207, 211, 212, 228, 245, 250, 251; *Being and Time*, 2, 182, 206; *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 70; "Letter on Humanism," 19
- Heine, Heinrich, 20, 44-45, 167; *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, 45
- Heraclitus, 141, 231
- Herder, J. G. von, 197
- Hildebrand, Bruno, 75
- historical materialism, 63-64
- Hobbes, Thomas, 108
- Horkheimer, Max, 243
- Hühnerfeld, Paul, 70
- humanism, 19
- Hume, David, 60, 136
- Husserl, Edmund, 9, 17, 31, 44, 65, 87, 117, 184, 186, 206, 250
- idealism, 48-49, 51, 53, 55, 56, 58, 73, 163, 164, 165, 168, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 190, 191, 192, 195, 197, 210, 215, 221, 229, 234, 245, 246, 250
- ideology, 15-32, 33, 49, 55, 160
- irrationalism, 11-12, 193, 194, 216;

INDEX

- epistemological, 55-77, 80, 153,
157; philosophical and political,
175-213
- James, William, 141
- Jamme, Christoph, 70
- Jaspers, Karl, 185, 204, 212
- Joachim, H. H., 49
- Jünger, Ernst, 204
- Kant, Immanuel, 7, 10, 18, 24, 27, 28,
35, 43, 44, 46, 48, 49, 56, 58, 59,
65, 66, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76, 79,
87, 98, 100, 105, 106, 107, 108,
109, 110, 111-113, 116, 117, 120,
121, 123, 132, 136, 146, 147, 148,
149, 151, 158, 168, 170, 177, 180,
198, 208, 210, 213, 234, 247, 250;
"Conjectural Beginning of Human
History," 61; *Critique of Judgment*,
60, 112; *Critique of Practical Reason*,
60; *Critique of Pure Reason*,
60, 109; "The End of All Things,"
61; *Fundamental Principles of the
Metaphysics of Morals*, 60; "Idea
for a Universal History from a Cos-
mopolitan Point of View," 61; on
history, 60-62; "Perpetual Peace,"
62; *Prolegomena to Any Future
Metaphysics*, 62; "What Is Enlight-
enment?" 61
- Kantians, 7
- Kierkegaard, Søren, 9, 46, 117, 181,
182, 198, 200, 211
- Klages, Ludwig, 204, 212
- Knies, Karl, 75, 76
- Korsch, Karl, 4, 19, 34, 56, 80
- Krieck, Ernst, 204
- Kroner, Richard, 208
- Kuhn, Thomas, 42
- labor, 22
- Lask, Emil, 9, 11, 12, 57, 59, 65, 66,
67, 68-74, 75, 76, 77, 114, 122-
123, 126, 196
- Lasson, Georg, 166
- Lebensphilosophie*. See vitalism
- Leibniz, G. W., 108, 229
- Lenin, V. I., 16, 36, 81, 82, 150, 162,
173, 189, 190, 191, 192, 208, 211,
219, 222, 223, 236, 239; *Material-
ism and Empiriocriticism*, 189
- Locke, John, 17, 88, 109
- Lotze, R. W., 72
- Lukács, Georg: *The Destruction of
Reason*, 155, 179, 180, 192-213,
216, 227, 239; *Die Eigenart des
Ästhetischen*, 217; *Existentialism or
Marxism?*, 155, 179-192, 213;
History and Class Consciousness, 2,
12, 13, 80, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157,
158, 159, 160, 162, 163, 165, 167,
169, 170, 175, 180, 182, 183, 189,
191, 193, 195, 199, 216, 217, 219,
220, 221, 223, 226, 227, 230, 231,
237, 240; "Reification and Con-
sciousness of the Proletariat," 12,
79-151, 155, 156, 231; *The Young
Hegel*, 155, 159, 175, 176, 178,
180, 198, 216, 233; *Zur Ontologie
des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, 155,
216-242
- Luther, Martin, 45
- Luxemburg, Rosa, 81, 150, 189
- Maimon, Salomon, 110
- Mannheim, Karl, 209
- Marcuse, Herbert, 243

- Marx, Karl, 1, 15-32, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 51, 62, 79, 81, 82, 85, 86, 88, 90, 94, 96, 97, 101, 103, 107, 109, 114, 117, 123, 125, 129, 130, 132, 136, 140, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 180, 181, 182, 186, 189, 191, 194, 201, 207-208, 211, 220, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 235, 236-238, 240, 241, 242, 243, 245, 246, 249; *Capital*, 17, 20, 31, 38, 82, 83, 89, 90, 92, 156, 157; "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," 130; "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State," 17, 19; *The Critique of Political Economy*, 18, 19, 24, 31; "The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophies of Nature," 17; "Epicurean, Stoic and Skeptical Philosophies," 16; *The German Ideology*, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24; *The Grundrisse*, 18, 19, 31, 36; *The Holy Family*, 17; "The Paris Manuscripts," 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 36, 80, 86, 157, 159, 164, 165, 167, 169, 171, 172, 173, 224, 228, 233
- Marxism, 6, 7, 30, 36, 40, 42, 48, 50, 53, 55, 57, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 98, 99, 100, 101, 104, 109, 119, 122, 129, 130, 133, 142, 143, 147, 149, 153, 155, 158, 159, 162, 163, 166, 167, 172, 175, 176, 181-182, 183, 187, 188, 189, 196, 197, 205, 211, 213, 215, 216, 219, 220, 223, 226, 229, 230, 213, 234, 235, 237, 238, 241, 242, 243, 245, 246, 248, 249, 250, 251; main tenets of, 7
- materialism, 51, 56, 137-139, 147, 151, 164, 165, 174, 176, 178, 180, 181, 189, 190, 191, 192, 196, 210, 215, 221, 222, 229, 234, 238, 245, 246, 250
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 181, 183, 185, 187, 188
- Mészáros, István, 159
- Moore, G. E., 185
- Müller, Adam, 211
- neo-Kantianism; German, 8, 12, 53, 57, 59, 63, 118, 186; and irrationalism, 8; and Marxian economics, 79-102; view of history, 55-77, 84
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, 10, 46, 101, 185, 198, 200-202, 211, 212
- objective idealism, 153-174, 196, 199, 208
- Owen, Robert, 18
- Parmenides, 6
- Pascal, Blaise, 197
- Plato, 9, 28, 31, 35, 49, 72, 99, 110, 144, 225, 245
- Plekhanov, G. V., 120
- Popkin, Richard, 60
- proletarian standpoint, 129-151
- Protagoras, 142
- Pythagoras, 9
- Quine, W. V. O., 43, 250
- reason, Marxist view of, 215, 243-251

- reflection theory of knowledge, 147–148, 183, 191
- reification, 79–102, 129, 144, 146, 154, 157, 160, 161, 196
- Reinhold, K. L., 110
- Rescher, Nicholas, 49, 70, 250
- Ricardo, David, 232
- Rickert, Heinrich, 11, 57, 59, 63, 65, 66, 67, 73–75, 76, 77, 135, 147, 211; *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*, 74; *Science and History: A Critique of Positivist Epistemology*, 74
- Rorty, Richard, 50
- Roscher, Wilhelm, 75
- Rosenberg, Alfred, 204
- Rousseau, J.-J., 120, 197
- Russell, Bertrand, 24
- Saint Simon, C.-H., 18
- Sartre, J.-P., 10, 24, 181, 183, 184, 186–187, 188, 206; “Communists and Peace,” 187; *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 187; “Materialism and Revolution,” 187; “Existentialism Is a Humanism,” 187; *The Family Idiot*, 187
- Scheler, Max, 204
- Schelling, F. W. J., 9–10, 16, 67, 68, 72, 98, 110, 160, 168, 177, 180–181, 182, 198–199, 210, 211
- Schiller, Friedrich, 121
- Schopenhauer, Arthur, 9, 67, 68, 198, 199–200, 211
- Schutz, Alfred, 186
- Simmel, Georg, 57, 59, 62, 65, 91, 204, 205, 212; *The Problems of History*, 62–64
- Smith, Adam, 88, 170
- social ontology, 198, 215–242
- Spengler, Oswald, 205
- Spinoza, Benedict de, 9, 108, 114, 121, 135, 149
- Stalin, Joseph, 16, 157, 158, 162, 173, 220
- Stalinism, 6, 157, 158, 222
- subjective idealism, 177–178, 179, 185, 192, 200, 203, 208, 245
- Taylor, F. W., 91
- theory and practice, 27, 116–118, 132, 144, 148–149, 246
- thing-in-itself, 11, 68, 105, 106–107, 111–113, 123, 150, 151, 175, 176, 196, 240; Engels's view of, 118–119
- Toennies, Ferdinand, 209
- Trendelenburg, F. A., 200
- Trotsky, Leon, 188
- Vico, Giambattista, 17, 60, 107, 108, 143, 197
- Vienna Circle thinkers, 7, 43, 87, 184
- vitalism, 202–206, 208, 212
- Weber, Alfred, 209
- Weber, Max, 57, 59, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 75–76, 91, 92, 93, 101, 209–210, 227
- Whitehead, A. N., 111, 141
- Windelband, Wilhelm, 59, 62, 63, 64–68, 70, 74, 75, 77; *A History of Philosophy*, 67–68; “History and Natural Science,” 64–67
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 2, 7, 24, 43, 87, 117, 120, 131; *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 2
- Young Hegelians, 29, 40, 44, 45, 126